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XMAS DOUBLE ISSUE

Escape from 1986

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Senator McGOVERN
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&
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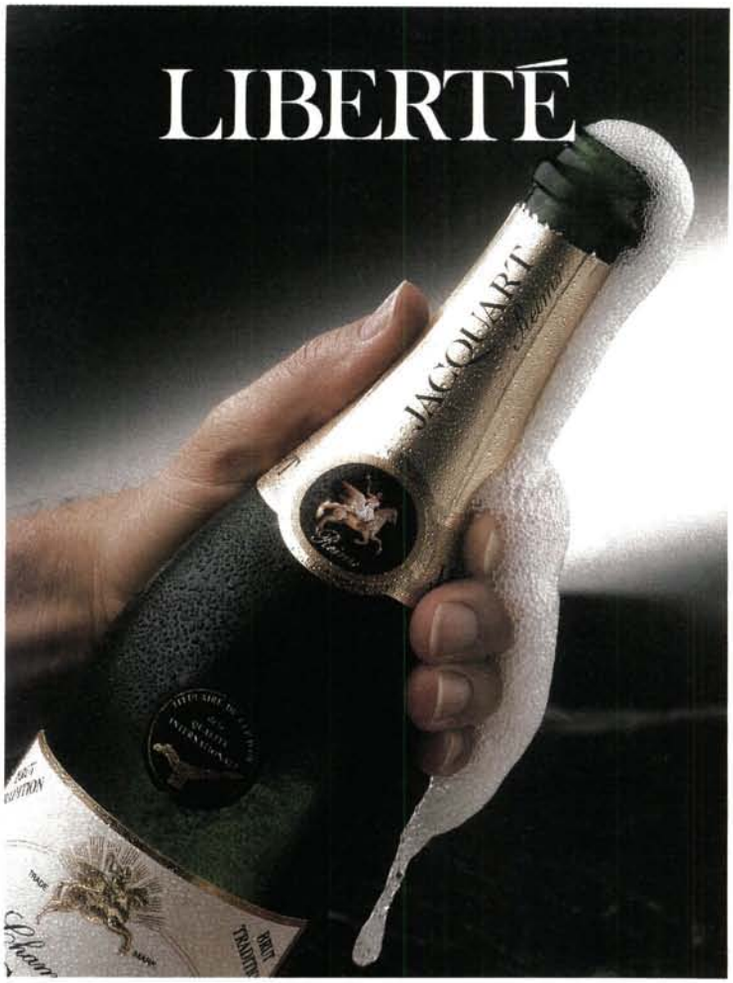

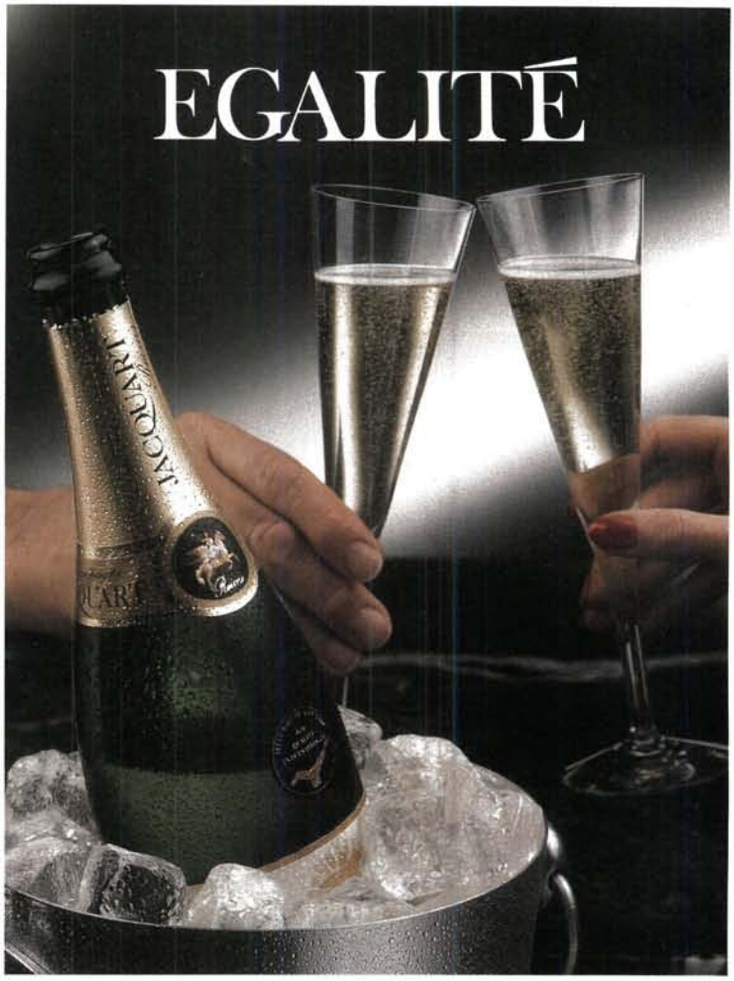

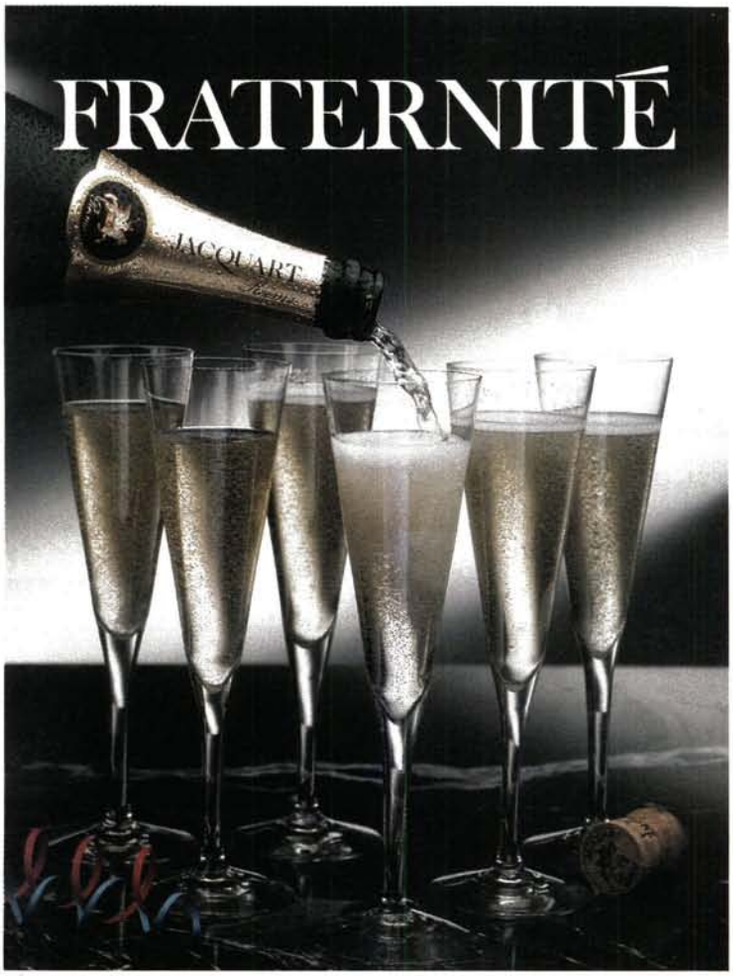

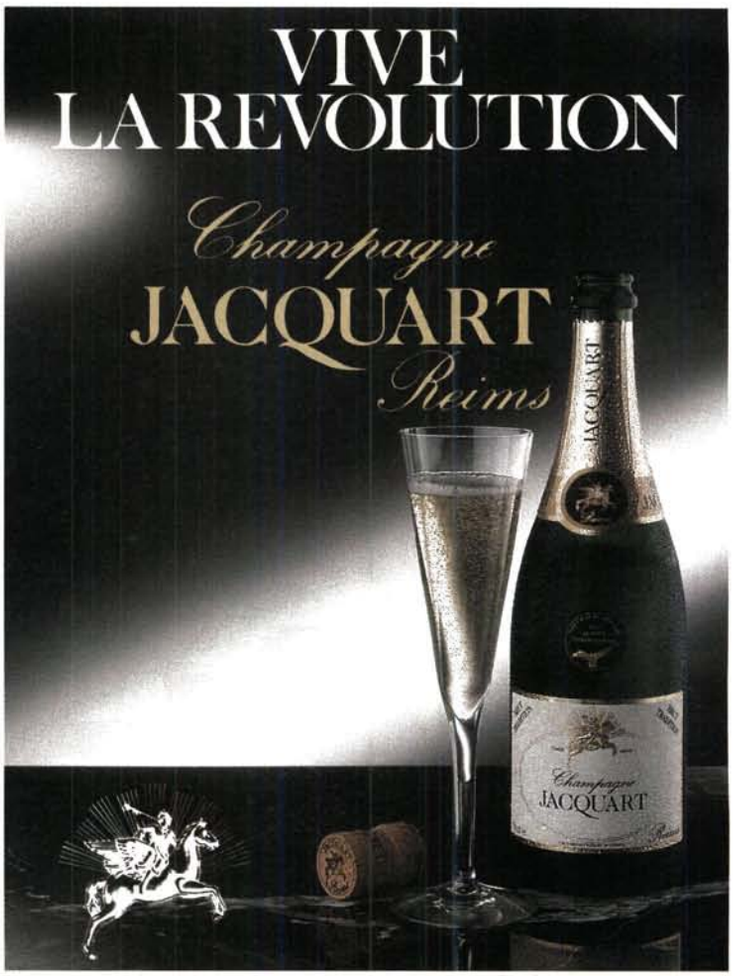

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NEW STATESMAN

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New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU
Tel: 01-253 2001/Editorial: 01-253 2003
Telex: 28449/Cables: Newstat, London EC1
© 1986 Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd & contributors
Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co Ltd
Distributed by NS Distribution

Editor: John Lloyd; **Books and Arts Editor:** Harriett Gilbert; **Writers:** Sarah Benton, Duncan Campbell, Jane Dibblin, Rob Edwards (Scotland), Patrick Forbes, Peter Kellner (Political Editor), Andrew Lumsden (Associate Editor), John Rentoul; **Deputy Books & Arts Editor:** Malcolm Imrie; **Poetry Editor:** Hugo Williams; **Production Manager:** Joanne Hurst; **Art Editor:** Vicky Hutchings; **Editorial Assistant:** Jane Thomas

Subscriptions: Cecilia Milton, Joan Scanlon; **Display advertisements:** Laura Berryman, David Jones (01-253 2001); **Classified advertisements:** Janet Banks (01-251 5487)

Subscription rates: UK & Eire £40; Europe (air mail only £46); rest of world: air speeded £51; air mail £61. USA: air speeded $70; air mail $85. Canada: air speeded Can $90; air mail Can $115.

Second class postage paid at New York, NY USPS 382260. Air freight in US by Speedimpex USA Inc. (US Postmaster: Address changes should be sent to New Statesman, Speedimpex USA Inc., 45-45 39th Street, Long Island City, NY 11104)

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol 112 Nos 2908/2909 19/26 December 1986

A future for socialism

THE GOVERNMENT ends 1986 in good shape. It has shown itself several points ahead in the polls for the past month: neither the MI5 affair, nor the sudden slide in President Reagan's popularity, has had discernible effect on it. It cannot be said to lack new ideas or new plans: Kenneth Baker has laid out a programme for a fundamental re-ordering of the educational system, and Nicholas Ridley will abolish the domestic rate in favour of a poll tax throughout the UK (it is already happening in Scotland) in the next session of Parliament. A manifesto, with further reforms of union electoral and balloting procedures, and further privatisation measures, is being prepared for the spring.

Mrs Thatcher is being talked up once more. She is said to have acquired some of the Teflon which is being scraped off Ronald Reagan. The initiative she and her ministers took at the Conservative Party conference in October has not been lost. 1986 ends on this harsh note for the left: the government, on present indications, will be hard to beat.

Yet the year's close shows us that it has been a bad year for the country. The fall in the oil price laid bare what was hidden: the dramatic deterioration in our manufactured exports leaves the post-oil economy, into which we are moving, in a dangerously bad way. The balance of trade on manufactured goods for 1986 is likely to be *minus* £9bn — a record by nearly £3bn.

This issue will increasingly dominate discussion about our economic state: and about time it did. It will not, however, impact hard upon the country until the end of next year: in the meantime, relatively low inflation and relatively high real earnings give a phoney flush of health. The low levels of investment, of education and training and of research should be the central matters of political debate, and in each the government's record has been poor to dreadful: but it will be difficult to haul round the public's attention to what most concerns their future well being. Unemployment remains among the highest in Western Europe: but it has been, slowly, falling. An election campaign orchestrated by the Saatchis and Sir Gordon Reece could do much with this material, and we can be certain they will.

So what's to be done? First, a greater insistence on the facts of our life: on the desperate importance of again using state intervention to stimulate and direct an economy which has been assailed over the past seven years by the doctrines of defunct right-wing economists. A continuing and strengthened stress on the individual and collective debilitation of unemployment. A dramatisation of the divisions in our society, of the desolation and insecurity of the poor, of the hopelessness of whole areas of the country. The belief must again be re-established — it is not impossible — that while millions of our citizens remain in economic misery, it is the duty of society to remedy that as best it can. Thatcherism has above all been a me-first philosophy: societies lacking infinite resources cannot long run on such a basis, or we all come last.

Underpinning this is the need to begin to fill the vacuum which has been the left's response to the right. The government has been able to act, and acts still, because it has a philosophical basis for doing so. It has made the simply-communicated equation of freedom with free markets, and from that all else is made to flow. Much of it has been tawdry and dishonest, but it has worked, and it has changed the landscape.

Now, the left is beginning to reassert iself on the terrain chosen by the right. In the coming year, the *New Statesman* will put the development of a new socialism at the centre of its publishing priorities: Bernard Crick gives a preview of the ground we hope to cover (p41): we will publish a special issue devoted to a 'new socialism' in late January/early February; and we will continue a flow of articles on the subject from now on. We will tap into work already under way by individuals and groups, work which is already beginning to infuse into the thinking of the opposition parties. We will also draw on the experiences and debates of other countries.

The imperatives of an election are likely to intrude on this. But whenever that comes and however it goes, this work has to be started. Or the Prime Minister's boast that she will rub out socialism in two more terms may come to pass. □

NEXT ISSUE — OUT 31 DEC.

Two demagogues: portraits of the Rev. Ian Paisley of Ulster and Col. Muammar Gadafy of Libya — both men reviled outside, but revered inside, their own societies

Plus: the German Socialists are in bad shape for their general election

HELP ARM SOUTH AFRICA'S CHILDREN.

How can a school child fight against rhino whips, grapeshot and bullets?

One answer is to arm them with rulers, pens and geography books.

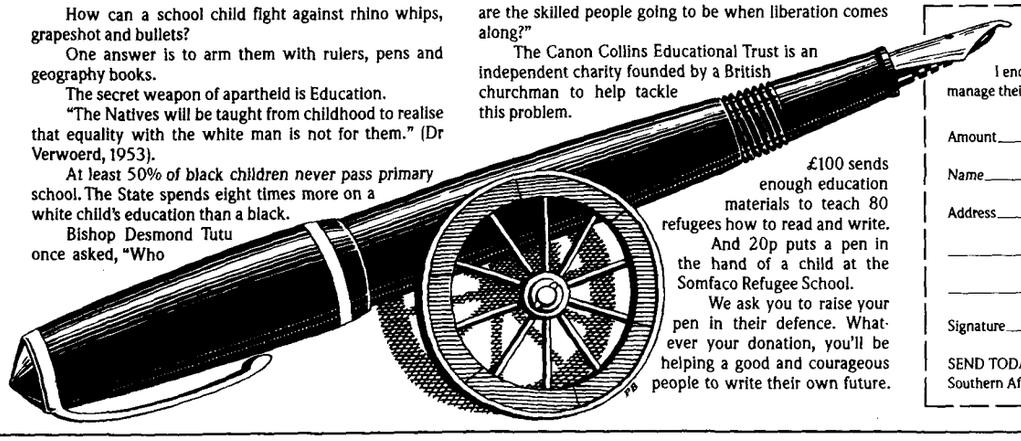
The secret weapon of apartheid is Education.

"The Natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with the white man is not for them." (Dr Verwoerd, 1953).

At least 50% of black children never pass primary school. The State spends eight times more on a white child's education than a black.

Bishop Desmond Tutu once asked, "Who are the skilled people going to be when liberation comes along?"

The Canon Collins Educational Trust is an independent charity founded by a British churchman to help tackle this problem.



£100 sends enough education materials to teach 80 refugees how to read and write. And 20p puts a pen in the hand of a child at the Somfaco Refugee School.

We ask you to raise your pen in their defence. Whatever your donation, you'll be helping a good and courageous people to write their own future.

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PETER KELLNER

Exclusive: the script of No. 10's Christmas pantomime

'ROBERT!'

'Prime Minister?'

'You have been behaving very strangely recently. Explain yourself.'

'I have not been behaving at all strangely. I went to Sydney to lie for Britain. If the Attorney-General hadn't been so disloyal, and if you hadn't agreed to cave in over the information in those Pincher documents, our story would have been watertight.'

'*Our* story? Surely you mean *your* story?'

'No Prime Minister; *our* story. I am a mere servant. I have no views of my own. I am but a cog in the machine of collective cabinet responsibility.'

'I suppose you will tell me next that when you lashed out at that photographer at Heathrow with your briefcase, you were simply obeying a cabinet order.'

'Very droll, Prime Minister, very droll. As you well know, I argued that it was a mistake to subject the workings of MI5 to interrogation by an Australian court. At that meeting in your office in the summer I urged that we should ask MI6 to get one of its men in Bob Hawke's office to indulge in a little extra-curricular . . .'

'Sshh, Robert. Walls have ears.'

'How did you discover that Prime Minister?'

'Discover what, Robert?'

'That every room in Number Ten is bugged.'

'Is it . . . I was only joking . . . you mean . . . Who? . . . When? . . . How? . . . This is outrageous.'

'You mean you *didn't* know, Prime Minister?'

'Of course I didn't know. Did you think I would have talked to Leon Brittan the way I did just before his resignation if I had known? Or told John Wakeham what I really thought about Peter Walker and Kenneth Baker?'

'I have no idea, Prime Minister.'

'My goodness, I suppose you have all my discussions with Bernard Ingham on tape? And all those things I said to Cecil? It would be catastrophic if they came out into the open.'

'Fear not, Prime Minister, you are in safe hands.'

'Safe, Robert, *safe*? How can I be safe if MI5 are prying on me all the time? The Prime Minister is supposed to be in charge in this country.'

'Really? Whoever told you that?'

'This is no time to be flippant, Robert. It is an outrage. I want to know who authorised the bugging of Number Ten.'

'You did, Prime Minister.'

'I did? That's ridiculous. If I had authorised it I would have known about it. I didn't know, so I couldn't have authorised it.'

'If I may humbly interject, Prime Minister . . .'

'Humbly interject, Robert, I have never known you be humble about anything. You only "humbly interject" when you want to contradict me.'

'As you please, Prime Minister. What I was trying to say was that although prior authorisation might to the untutored eye imply prior knowledge, there are certain occasions when it is expedient for the defence of the realm so to arrange affairs that while the strict rules of authorisation continue to be observed scrupulously, a certain flexibility is introduced into the vocabulary of authorisation so as to induce the maximum of confidentiality even if this procedure limits specific knowledge within tighter boundaries than normally obtain.'

'What on earth does all that gobbledegook mean?'

'It means that information is kept to those who need to know, Prime Minister. You didn't need to know.'

'I didn't need to know? That is preposterous.'

'If I may explain, Prime Minister.'

'Please do. And try sticking to English.'

'Suppose, for the sake of argument, we had reason to believe that a Labour Party candidate —'

'We are not talking about a Labour Party candidate, Robert, we are talking about a Conservative Party Prime Minister.'

'Bear with me, Prime Minister. Suppose we had reason to believe that a Labour Party candidate was working for the KGB. Should we keep him, or her, under surveillance?'

'Of course.'

'And should we tell the candidate?'

'Of course not. But you should tell me.'

'What if the suspect is a Labour MP?'

'The same applies.'

'And if he — or she — is a Conservative MP?'

'Then I would definitely want to know.'

'Suppose the suspect is a minister?'

'I would immediately sack him.'

'Or her, Prime Minister.'

'You don't mean Edwina Currie —'

'Not at all, Prime Minister. But whoever it is, it might not be possible to sack the minister.'

'Why not?'

'Because a sudden dismissal would tell Moscow that we knew the minister was a spy. No, what we normally do in these circumstances is to leave the suspect in place and use him (or her) to feed false information to the Russians.'

'I see that, Robert. But I would still need to know what was happening.'

'But would you tell the minster, and hence alert Moscow?'

'Obviously not.'

'Very well, Prime Minister. But we have a problem.'

'I see no problem. You tell the Prime Minister everything, you tell the suspect nothing.'

'But what if the suspect *is* the Prime Minister, Prime Minister?'

'You don't mean . . . this is . . . how can you think . . .?'

'Just for the sake of argument, suppose a Prime Minister of the day — let us give him a suitably anonymous name, like "Wilson" — was suspected of being a Russian spy, then what is MI5 to do? Ignore the rumour and risk the very nerve-centre of British government being run by the KGB? Ask the Prime Minister if MI5 can tap his phones and bug his offices? The only sensible thing to do is carry out the surveillance without the Prime Minister knowing.'

'But how can MI5 do that legally, Robert, without the Prime Minister knowing.'

'That's easy. We could have asked the Home Secretary's permission, but we decided he did not have the standing to authorise the surveillance of his superior. So we arranged for you to sign the relevant document while making sure you did not know what it was really about.'

'How did you do that?'

'We waited for a particularly busy week, when you had red boxes coming and going all day long, and just slipped it in, Prime Minister.'

'Slipped what in?'

'One sheet of paper. It said: "The Prime Minister hereby authorises the security services to maintain surveillance on a limited number of suspects whose names are known personally to the director-general, provided that the director-general gives specific prior permission for the surveillance in each case; this permission to be delegated to more junior officers only in the case of extreme necessity".'

'I signed that?'

'You did, Prime Minister.'

'And you regarded that as sufficient authorisation to keep *me* under surveillance?'

'Yes, Prime Minister. You see, "a limited number" could mean anything up to 55 million; "whose names are known personally" means they appear on a computer print-out; "only in the case of extreme necessity" means whenever MI5 wants. What you did, Prime Minister, is give MI5 authority to keep tabs on whoever they want, whenever they want.'

'But what on earth made MI5 want to watch me? Surely they didn't think I was working for the Russians?'

'At one time they did, Prime Minister. They had a lot of evidence, even though it was all circumstantial.'

'What sort of evidence?'

'The way you ran the economy into the ground, and caused unemployment to rise. It looked as if you were encouraging British people to reject everything to do with capitalism. Then there was the way you broke with precedent and made statements in the Commons about Anthony Blunt and Sir Roger Hollis — definitely not in the national interest. And your defence policy was exactly what Moscow surely wanted.'

'What on earth do you mean by that, Robert?'

'The way you insisted on taking stupid decisions like accepting cruise missiles on British soil and buying Trident, while preparing to run down Britain's army in Germany.'

'Now MI5 have listened to all my private conversations, do they still think I am working for Moscow?'

'Oh no, they are much wiser now. Yes indeed, Prime Minister; we are all delighted to discover that you are truly one of us — and that you, too, are really working for the Americans.' □

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Nigella's walnut oil and Sam's bazookas in an English Armageddon scenario

I SUPPOSE I should have known it would be a funny year when the Chancellor of the Exchequer's daughter showed me her walnut oil.

'There's a marvellous wine warehouse that stocks it just around the corner,' she said. It was a large tin, big enough for several months of salad dressing. 'They're very helpful. You just ring them up and they'll deliver your order right through the picket line.'

'Really?' I said. I like Nigella. She has big dark eyes and always looks as though she needs someone tall and strong to protect her; and it seems unjust somehow to blame her for monetarism. I took down the wine warehouse's phone number, Nigella went off to her afternoon's work on the literary pages, and I settled down in front of Rupert Murdoch's new computers at my desk next to the rubber plant in the *Sunday Times* foreign department. This was Wapping in February. Outside, the cries of the pickets rose and fell:

'Scab, scab.'

'Judas.'

We had entered what Andrew Neil, the editor, used to refer to as the 'Armageddon scenario'; a military allusion the Biblical meaning of which seemed to have been forgotten. It was, in the trench-warfare sense, accurate enough. We were besieged and had dug in for the duration behind looped barbed wire and pools of mud. But we were winning. The *Sun* got out and the walnut-oil got in, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer's daughter went on correcting the galley proofs of the book reviews which were still submitted by critics, some of whom were 'on the Left' and perhaps even members of the party whose membership had been instructed to have no dealings with the workers of Wapping.

It is, of course, unfair to pick out Nigella. There were hundreds of us. But I can't forget the walnut-oil. For me it was the first clue in a trail of evidence that sealed the case against many writers of English fiction who try, in their novels, plays and films, to describe the condition of England by heightening its reality. They are wasting valuable imaginations. The reality of England is already high enough; just getting it right in simple documentary terms should earn any writer the *Prix Goncourt*. Isn't Jeffrey Archer, after all, more interesting than any character he has managed to create?

Winter

Things fall apart. I argue for going to Wapping, vote (meaninglessly) against going to Wapping, go to Wapping, leave Wapping. Others of my colleagues argue against going to Wapping, vote against going to Wapping, go to Wapping, stay in Wapping. This is a mote-and-beam situation and nobody should cast the first stone; most journalists on the *Sunday Times*, I guess, are on the proprietor's rather than the printers' side, but few of us want to be seen as greedy and opportunistic. A few people never go to Wapping and get the sack; others go determined to make it work. These occupy the moral high ground; the rest of us below are mired in contradictions.

The Parliamentary Labour Party decides it won't speak to Murdoch journalists, while the National Graphical Association, the more militant of the two unions in the dispute, permits its members to continue setting the *Sunday Times Magazine* and the *Times* supplements.

Sogat members call me a scab every time I leave or enter the gates but cannot persuade their fellow members in the provinces to stop distributing scab products. John Mortimer, sometimes mistaken for the unhumbugged voice of liberal England, is in a dither. He doesn't want to cancel his contract with the paper, but at the same time would prefer if his stuff didn't appear in it. He tells Andrew Neil he would like to 'wait and see', which Neil describes as 'a very English decision' and I can see what he means. Armageddon is a cosier place if you're knitting socks at home in Blighty.

Around this time, too, I can't help noticing that some strong anti-Murdoch sentiments voiced elsewhere come from people who weren't shy to take large lump sums of Murdoch money. But perhaps I feel bitter because such large lump sums are no longer available to me.

Enter Samantha's bazookas. Two old friends, David Blundy and Jon Swain, are making their way out towards the pickets one day when they see a reminder of their days in Belfast or Beirut growling up and down inside the barbed wire entanglements. It is an armoured personnel carrier with some Royal Marines perched on top. Surely we're not now protected by the British Army on the Rhine as well as the Metropolitan Police? 'No,' says a security guard, 'it's just brought in Samantha Fox.'

It has too. The next day the *Sun* carries a page one story — *Samantha joins the War of Wapping* — which describes her 'pointing her bazookas at the enemy lines' and inspecting 'her privates' who are loyally at work in the *Sun*'s new offices. What it omits to mention is that this spectacularly-endowed daughter of the Finsbury Park working-class sat on top of her armoured car as it drove through the picket lines *twice* on the way in; the second time to recreate the fun, as it were, of the first passage, when her old fans, the sacked members of the *Sun* machine-room jeered and whistled.

David Hare and Howard Brenton, the authors of *Pravda*, could sit together for weeks over black coffee and still fail to produce such a stunning piece of theatre, or such a ghastly metaphor for the state (or indeed State) we're in. I'm surprised it hasn't transferred to the South Bank, where it would not be believed.

'So this is the gutter!'

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Spring

The best lack all conviction. In my resignation letter to the editor I compare him to Captain Queeg in the *Caine Mutiny*. In his hurt reply he says he has 'never interfered with anything you wanted to write, or when you wanted to write it.' This is true. Remorse sets in and I apologise for the needless insult, but I still leave because the rights and wrongs of Wapping, going round in my head like a cat with a tin can tied to its tail, are beginning to drive me barmy.

The next week, in Los Angeles on an assignment for *Vanity Fair* magazine, I meet the man who took his name from Captain Queeg's ship. Michael Caine (*né* Micklewhite) bangs on about the state of the old country for a while — *New Statesman* readers may be pleased to know that he thinks Socialism and the Labour Party mean the same thing — and concludes with a line from *Pravda*, the play, which really tickled him; when Anthony Hopkins (as the Murdoch-Maxwell-Rowland proprietor) tells his eager but confused little editor: 'the trouble with you people is that you don't know what you believe.' And that, says Caine, is precisely the trouble with the British.

Well, yes and no. The beliefs of the machine-room minders on the picket line at Wapping are absolutely unequivocal; they believe they have the right to go on earning the same large wages in the same old way. Even more unrealistically, they believe they can achieve this by massing in the cold and shouting at newspaper lorries.

Belief isn't the problem here, but thought is. On a couple of Saturdays I go down to the picket line to discover what it's like to be among the jeering rather than the jeered at. White middle-aged men with semi-detacheds in Essex mill about on the pavement, muttering about their new-found disenchantment with the police (inside Wapping the workers who have dispossessed them are young, often female and sometimes black, and too young ever to have been enchanted with the police who protect them).

I meet a compositor who used to work on the *Sunday Times* literary pages. I say he must be pleased that two of the journalists he worked with, Claire Tomalin and Sean French, are among the few who refused to cross a picket line. He is, he says, and then adds wistfully of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's daughter: 'That Nigella, she's a bold one. She comes through those picket lines as calm as you like.'

He thinks for a moment: 'It must be in the breeding.'

Summer

We're househunting. We get to know estate agents, sometimes more quickly and intimately than we'd reckoned on:

'Hi Ian, it's Mick here from the Stoke Newington office.'

Mick is one of the new breed. Last month he was selling insurance, this month he's selling houses. He doesn't hold with all this crap about estate agents being a profession, like doctors or the law; he's into selling houses and these days in the North London market they move very fast. In a way, I like his attitude. Estate agents are middle men in the purest sense, unfettered by responsibility, whose skill lies in introducing buyers to sellers. Why pretend there is more to it?

One day Mick arrives at the door in his yellow jeep with the slogan *The Trendiest Estate Agent in The World* painted on its side.

'Hi Ian.'

'Hi Mick.'

He's come to give our house the once-over and trots up and down the stairs with a light-meter gadget which measures room sizes. Then he speaks into a tape-recorder; he has more electronic equipment as a house agent than I do as a reporter.

'Cornicing in front room. Original working fireplace. Patio. Garden laid to lawn.'

We have a cup of tea. Who, I wonder, is buying all these £80,000 flats in Stoke Newington?

'Yuppies.'

Well of course. I've seen the word in the Sunday newspapers now for years, but the only working definition I have for them is as consumers, with their infamous fixation on Filofaxes and Perrier water. Mick's definition cuts out the frills. 'They're in their early twenties, they're earning maybe 20 to 25 thousand a year, they've no trouble getting a 100 per cent mortgage equal to three times their salary, they work in video, advertising, or in the City and the media.' He likes them; they've never bought property before and they are 'very malleable', easy to sell to. 'Usually you only show them two properties. Let them see the worst one first and they'll usually take the second.'

Later in the summer, politely tapping the walls in other people's houses, I think I begin to recognise the type. They have very pretty homes in pastel shades, where dado rails have been painstakingly restored and fireplaces, bought from shops with names like Amazing Grates, put back. This and the mortgage payments have left their owners with very little money. Often a stereo is their most striking piece of furniture; very rarely there are books.

Autumn

The richer the society, the fewer people smoke. In California, smoking is now regarded as a weirdly old-fashioned activity, on a par with medieval flagellation or electronic trams. Things are not much better (or worse) in New York. Pathetically, I still smoke, and when Tina Brown, the editor of *Vanity Fair*, invites me to lunch at the Four Seasons restaurant I am filled with foreboding.

The Four Seasons is rather a grand place, in fact it features as the cover story in that week's *New York Magazine* as the true home of the power-lunch. Tobacco and power used to be inseparable (as Stanley Baldwin used to say on the tobacco tin: 'My thoughts grow in the aroma of Presbyterian Mixture'), but now power combines most potently with health. Not only are there no smoking lunchers at the Four Seasons, there seem to be very few drinking lunchers either. The atmosphere is Alpine in its clarity, the ashtrays merely decorative objects like spittoons. Occasionally ice tinkles in a water glass. After the fresh raspberries I allow myself one Silk Cut, feeling rather like H. M. Bateman's man who dared to throw a snowball at St Moritz.

Winter

Bradford is not a rich city, though it once was, and matches are scratched soon after most people meet one another. Here the Perrier and Filofax culture has not caught on, despite the chastisements of Mrs Edwina Currie. When she arrives to address a meeting at Hebden Bridge she is greeted by members of the local Labour Party who, to mock her idea of the North, have dressed up in shawls and flat caps. Also, according to the *Yorkshire Post*, they hand her a pound of tripe. But I wonder if Mrs Currie is so far wrong? My nights out in Bradford are great fun but punishing: twenty cigarettes, six pints of Guinness, a prawn biryani, five poppadums, a packet of dry-roasted peanuts. A year of evenings like this and I'd be dead.

The Oldham Two are celebrating. Actually they used to be the Oldham Nine, nine people who had been arrested while trying to disrupt a National Front meeting in Oldham, but the magistrate had dismissed charges against seven of them. Now they are the Oldham Zero; that morning the court has dismissed charges against the rest. We go to a pub that doesn't close till one in the morning. It is dangerously manic, like Alan Bleasdale's pub in *The Boys From The Blackstuff*, and I expect the barman to call the Last Trump rather than last orders. Then we go for a curry, then to a club where they play soul music and I can't hear what the anti-fascist from the private detective agency is trying to tell me.

'There'll be civil war with the whites,' says an Asian boy. 'I don't care if I die.'

A drunk girl wants to buy a cigarette from me. 'Just have it,' I say.

'No, I want to buy it, you fucker.'

One of the Oldham Zeroes kindly offers me a lift back to the hotel. He engages first gear and drives straight into a lamp-post. I walk down the hill alone, past the sites of textile factories and the Asian corner stores. Eventually, close to the hotel, I reach estate-agent territory. Their office windows are still lit. I look inside and make calculations. In January this year our little house in London was worth the equivalent of 7.5 similarly terraced houses in Bradford. This month, December, it could buy ten of them.

Perhaps, in that statistic, there lies the real story of the year; and perhaps, soon, English fictionalists will take lessons from old realists such as Bennett and Galsworthy and restore property closer to the centre of the English novel. Together with Samantha's bazookas and even walnut oil, it is, after all, so very close to all our hearts.

Ian Jack

This England

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please.)

☐ Corrosion in two pipes at Hinkley Point nuclear reactor in Somerset was probably caused by a builder urinating into them years ago, according to the CEGB. The shutdown has just cost £500,000. — *Yorks. Evening Post* (W. Goerke)

☐ The Civil Service has opened its doors to television cameras to reveal how the 'chosen few' are recruited to become the high-fliers destined for the top jobs. After Tim Cooke's argument over nuclear power, with Mr Hunter-Johnston, he came out, still being filmed, cursing his luck and said to another candidate waiting for interview: 'I asked him if he would live next door to a nuclear power station, but the bastard said yes'. — *The Times* (Leonard Cox)

☐ Radioactivity (Mistletoe): Dr Mark Hughes asked the Secretary of State for the Environment what steps his Department is taking to monitor levels of radioactive caesium in imported mistletoe over the Christmas period. Mr Waldegrave: I have taken expert advice about this matter. My advisors conclude that even a prolonged period of standing under such mistletoe would not be harmful. It would not however be wise to eat imported — or home grown — mistletoe. — *Hansard* (B. R. Jackson)

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1986

MONEY

Mrs T's Achilles heel

It's been the year of fraud. Fraud by Wall St whizzkid Ivan Boesky, fined $100 million. And nasty tales rising from Mrs Thatcher's own 'basement', the City, as her share-owning democracy began to learn what insider-trading — from which they are excluded — really is. In our running Review of the Year we kick off with the City.* PATRICK FORBES *predicts that City scandals will multiply in '87.

THE CITY would like to present insider traders Geoffrey Collier of UK merchant bank Morgan Grenfell, and Ivan Boesky, arbitrage demon of Wall St, as the Spirit of Times Past. Newly-granted statutory powers, stricter adherence to compliance rules, and a new climate of kiss and tell (exemplified by Collier's rapid dethroning) will make them yesterday's men. That's the idea.

- Insider trading is here to stay — it may even have been made easier by the technological innovations of the 'Big Bang', this autumn's deregulation ending fixed price commissions.
- In 1987 trading conditions in the City will favour corporate as well as individual sharp practice breaching the spirit or fact of law and/or amounting to outright fraud.
- Doubts persist about the ability of the new City watchdog, the Securities and Investment Board (SIB), to police the City.

Geoffry Collier's transgression was to buy shares in engineering group AE hours ahead of the announcement of an agreed takeover from one of Robert Maxwell's investment vehicles, Hollis — on the basis of privileged information. The deal netted him £15,000 — small beer when set against a salary of £300,000.

Pre 'Big Bang,' Collier would not have been able to make the trade. Morgan Grenfell, advisers to Hollis, would not have called him in on the afternoon of Sunday 2 November for advice on the correct share price for the bid, as head of their new in-house securities team. They would have gone to an outside stockbrokers. Collier then phoned the US late on Sunday to arrange the purchase of 50,000 AE shares through his company. (He telephoned from the house of another Morgan Grenfell executive, who is stoutly maintaining that Collier simply asked him if he could use the phone, without explaining why). The order was placed through the Los Angeles office of Scrimgeour Vickers, and executed at around 8.00 am on Monday in London at a price of 237p per share. By the evening the price was up to 267p. Prior to Big Bang — with its emphasis on a global securities market — nobody would have been in a stockbrokers' office at 12.10 pm in LA, and 8.00 am in London, and Collier would not have been able to place his order.

Some argue the deterrent value of harsh penalties — but it's difficult to see this eliminating such a prevalent practice. Stockbrokers are unabashed about this: 'well (insider trading) has only been illegal since 1981, and frankly it is hard for these fifty-year-olds to break the habit of a lifetime', said one to me. Ian Stephenson of brokers Wood Mackenzie: 'there are household names in the City who have built up their wealth from insider dealing.' David Craig of International Financial Markets: 'all I have is the newspapers, the Topic screen, and the brokers, just like everybody else . . . but sometimes I can be so far behind the tape, it's not true. There is statistical evidence that in five out of ten bid situations the price has moved by more than 20 per cent before the bid has been announced.'

Wilkinson, of Stock Exchange surveillance, argues that new powers assumed by the government in a rush after the Collier scandal will help crack down on share-dealing from inside and prior knowledge, even if they won't eliminate it. In addition the Department of Trade's retrospective power will, he forecasts, lead to the re-opening of several old files over the next few months: 'eight or nine cases, and three or four are pretty juicy.'

But others are less sanguine about the possibility of prevention or detection. Ian Stephenson: 'short of bugging all the phones in the City, it's impossible to trace insider trading. OK so the phones are recorded here, but it only needs somebody to pick up the (untappable) vodafone in the dealing room to be right outside the system.' Wilkinson admits that the real problem remains the tax haven companies used by such as Collier, where the ultimate owner cannot be traced.

> ***'It's a dangerous combination. I see people cornering bits of the market. It has a hint of desperation about it, since you lose your friends — but if you book a profit . . .'***

NEXT YEAR the age-old problem of insider trading is likely to be compounded by another practice — 'front running'. This can be loosely defined as insider trading on behalf of your firm, rather than yourself. A broker is aware that a client is about to buy or sell a large amount of stock, so the broker buys or sells in advance of that order, netting a handsome profit for his or her firm, while the client, who might be miles even continents away, is blissfully unaware.

David Cornwall, computer consultant to the City, thinks that 'front running may be an irresistible temptation in 12-18 months time, when the chips are down. Big Bang has already squeezed margins down to zero on some big deals, and so firms are going to be looking for profits from deals done on their own behalf, rather than commission earned from clients.'

Under SIB rules 'front running' is an illegal act. Barbara Conway, PR person for SIB, sternly insists that firms should always achieve 'best execution' for clients, adding that if they don't their clients will go elsewhere. But post 'Big Bang', loss of a client is less of a threat. And front running is already common practice. David Craig, managing director of City firm International Financial Markets, defends it: 'it's morally dubious, but frankly any trader moves first, the accent is on moving as fast as possible.' Not merely is 'front running' common practice, it can also only be traced by the compliance officer of the firm concerned, as Barbara Conway agrees.

The other people needing money by the middle

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Janet Gill

Short of bugging all the phones in the City, it's impossible to trace insider trading

of next year, besides competing trading outfits, will be the individual brokers, dependent on performance bonuses for most of their six-figure salaries. Ian Kerr, of brokers Kidder Peabody, thinks that in 1987 there will be an unfortunate congruence between individual and corporate need for profit: 'The main problem is the system that the City has created for itelf. To earn the bonus, performance will be *created*. Say a trader was paid semi-annual bonuses, and that trader knew he was facing a thumping great loss on his book. He could contact his pal in the market (it's a very small market, and everbody knows everybody) and run off a series of trades, whereby his pal lost and he profited — bingo, performance.

'To offset his pal's loss (and attendant loss of performance bonus), he would agree to share his own performance bonus. This would have a major destabilising effect on the market as traders competed to share each other's bonus, rather than earn no bonus at all. If discovered then he can quit, and move on to another organisation — skills are at a premium.'

IF ANYONE was under the illusion that such problems were the sole province of the Stock Exchange, moneybroker's Exco's bland press release of 3 December should have disabused them:

> Exco International PLC announces that dealing irregularities have come to light in one of its subsidiaries, Municipal Brokers Limited. These involve former employees who appear to have benefited personally from the transactions involved. These transactions are being investigated by Exco's lawyers, and the Fraud squad, and have been reported to the relevant authorities. Exco has agreed to compensate any party who has suffered loss when this has been determined. The amount involved is not material in Exco group terms.

As is usual, this concealed rather more than it revealed. While Exco has let it be known that 'the amount involved' was £1 million, broker's gossip has it that £2½ million is 'involved'. The employees, Steven Short, Gerry Erskine-Grime, and Adrian Rae, who had left Exco a month or so ago to set up their own firm, are accused of obtaining the money by quoting local authorities false prices, whilst booking deals at prevailing market prices and then siphoning off the difference into their own accounts. One at least of the trio is engaged in some form of bargaining with Exco in an attempt to lessen his penalty.

It is feared the scandal may also involve a local authority employee — how otherwise to explain the consistent acceptance of prices (over a year) that were worse, albeit by a fraction, than those prevailing in the market? To some, criticism of the Stock Exchange or other domestic markets misses the point. David Cornwall: 'The real scandal is the Eurobond market — there's no way of knowing who's buying or selling — there's no central exchange (the two main exchanges are CEDEL at Luxembourg, and Euroclear at Brussels) and no central regulation'.

Those eager to launder criminal monies have not been slow to exploit the grey areas in the Eurobond markets, particularly in the secondary market where issued bonds are bought and sold. It is noticeable that bond traders have been pushing SIB very hard for exclusion from the rules that the rest of the investment community is having to live with. They'll fail: as from next year there should be a competing central exchange, at Zurich, and for the first time the market will be regulated, by SIB.

Whatever the improvements in regulation, trading conditions in these markets favour corporate fraud. Profits are very hard to come by; as one trader put it: 'volume in the market has gone up, but margins on deals are right down, so profits are the same as last year. It's a very dangerous combination — people have got all these incredible dealing rooms in place, they're paying dealers enormous salaries, and they're just not going to get the money in — high fixed overheads and no revenue. I see the following happening: people cornering bits of the market, say debt warrants (by cornering *ie* gaining control of the supply of a financial instrument, you can drive its price up). It has a hint of desperation about it, since you lose your friends . . . but if you book a profit . . .'

COMMON TO ALL these markets was a massive investment in new technology at the time of 'Big Bang'. Here the City missed a golden opportunity to crack clandestine fraud. It spent enormous sums of money on computerised trading desks (Front Office systems), capable of telling a trader the price and time of day in eighteen languages. But it left the settlement systems (Back Office — where the traders deals are matched) completely untouched, and independent of the trading desks. David Cornwall: 'The broker may be using all this

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amazing technology to make the trade, but he's still recording it on all those slips of paper. This opens the way to the classic foreign exchange fraud, where you buy a parcel of currencies in the morning, allocate your mates the best bits, and the client the worst.'

While the city revolution sweeps the securities markets, Lloyd's has stayed out of the limelight — appearing only to open its sparkling new, Richard Rogers designed headquarters. The Queen had a few choice words on the subject of recent history, 'Steady progress has been made and, *I am sure*, will continue to be made, towards a better supervised market.'

It is difficult to share the Queen's optimism. Lloyd's remains a market where, in the words of financial journalist Godfrey Hodgson, 'the fundamental problems will remain: 'it's a market administered by the people who work in it, there are conflicts of interest everywhere, virtually everybody is involved in every deal.' There is an official enquiry in progress (Sir Patrick Neill's) but nobody inside or outside the market expects great things of it — certainly not another Lloyd's Bill. 'Politically, an Act is boring, they've just got the Financial Services Bill out, after much shoving and pushing' — Christopher Crosthwaite, solicitor to the 'names' who got their fingers burnt in the PCW scandal of a few years back.

IF PROSPECTS are grim for effective regulation of Lloyd's, portents are not better for the City's new watchdog, the Securities and Investment Board. By mid-summer 1987 SIB will assume responsibility for regulating those parts of the city not policed by Lloyd's council, or the Banking Supervision Division of the Bank Of England. One of SIB's pamphlets pats itself on the back as 'a watchdog with teeth'. And so far SIB has had an excellent track record. It has attacked a wide range of problems with slender resources.

But those teeth will be blunted by SIB's status as a private company, dependent on agreement from the City on its regulations and its free income. The dangers are perfectly illustrated by the damaging row in which SIB and the commodity broking community are embroiled at present. The brokers want access to another Self Regulatory Organisation (SROs are the police on the beat to SIB's chief constable) in addition to the one they've already got. Until the row is settled, SIB cannot set a fee for its service — accordingly it cannot start hiring staff to act as gamekeepers, alongside the regulators it already has — and it cannot secure approval from Parliament for the new rules it has drawn up for the various sectors of the market.

Should we care about all this? Many on the left are inclined to the simplistic hope that financial capitalism will simply wither away, robbing Labour of the short term problem of understanding the opaque world of finance, and the long term need to eliminate all those rich men in suits. While that attitude persists the DHSS will continue to deploy 700, shortly to rise to 1,000, inspectors in pursuit of £22 million of social security fraud, and the Police City Fraud Squad 150 officers will chase £1 billion (1984) of big-money rip-offs in vain. The problem is endemic, and the existing structures are inadequate, and likely to become more so. As one banker confided in me: 'temptation goes where there is money.' □

In a forthcoming issue Clive Wolman will be putting Labour's policy for the City.

The poacher

IN JUNE 1985 Justin Frewen was jailed for two years on a charge of fraudulent trading. When his company Imperial Commodities collapsed creditors were owed £500,000. In his summing up Judge Christopher Hilliard described Frewen as 'an arrogant young man with a blind spot about other people's money.' He was released earlier this year on parole and he's been besieged by tabloids eager for tales of the expenditure that brought his and his company's downfall. He flew all over the world, dined at exclusive restaurants, had his family crest (he's the nephew of Viscount Selby) painted on one of his two Rolls Royces, held numerous extravagant dinner parties.

He agreed to talk to the *NS*, rather than our Fleet St cousins, because we were 'a serious newspaper'. Did he not feel a sense of responsibility for those who lost their life savings when Imperial Commodities went under? 'Oh yes, you always feel responsible if you're in charge of a company, and it goes down the tubes. But, you know, betting on commodities is no safer than betting on a roulette wheel.' This should not be true. Unlike the roulette wheel, if you want to 'bet' on commodities, it is your adviser's job (Frewen's) to tell you when to come into the market, and when to sell out; and (should the deal go sour) to limit the scale of your loss by use of 'stop loss orders' — a prearranged level at which your loss becomes unsustainable, and you bail out.

Frewen's inability to perform this task and control his extravagance led to Imperial Commodities' demise. He, of course, tells the story differently, citing inexperience in the ways of the world, rather than original sin. 'Well it was a very bad time to come into the market . . . prices were on the way down . . . and it is in man's nature to want to buy not sell, so our punters lost. And I was a very bad judge of characters; one of my dealers left, and started to send poison pen letters around . . . what a shit, even if he was a Guards man. We didn't distinguish between investors' and company money, but you name me a company that does' [most do] 'and at least we weren't running execution differences.' (That's a system where a company sells at x, but only 'books' the client at a price of x – 1 leaving a profit of 1 on each deal). 'Perhaps we should have'.

In a fit of conspiracy theory, Frewen blames his subsequent imprisonment on the media and the government. 'After that article in the *Observer*' (a prescient article by Michael Gillard in the *Observer* on 4 July 1982, reporting Frewen's investigation by the Department of Trade) 'a couple of friends' (unnamed) 'who were thinking of bailing me out, didn't want to know.' As to prosecution — 'a political decision, stands to reason, it took them a year and a half to prosecute . . . and this Conservative government wants to look good about its attitude to the City.'

A walking advert for the inequity of society's attitude toward City fraud, Frewen looks none the worst for his experience, immaculately dressed in suit and tie when we met on a Saturday. Now author of an epic poem — title 'Schadenfreude', written in prison and published privately 'putting my side of the story' — he's concentrating on his latest business venture, custom-made furniture. ●

The Gamekeeper

PROFESSOR Laurence (Jim) Gower is the architect of the new system of City regulation. His official reports (preliminary, 1982, and final, 1984) both provided the intellectual spur to reform, and the structure — an overall supervisory body (SIB, the Securities and Investment Board) overseeing the work of market-specific SROs, 'Self-Regulatory Organisations'. Now a consultant to SIB, he is a man with a message for the Labour Party.

In interview, he said, 'I am very much in favour of a privately funded SIB. I see yesterday the good John Smith (Labour's front bench Trade and Industry shadow) was contending that the great weakness of the system was that SIB was not a statutory body. With great respect for John Smith . . . and I do have . . . this is rubbish!

'SIB is a statutory body. It was formed under the 1985 Companies Act, and alright it has not been incorporated, but this is an advantage. It could have been formed as an overt quango, but then, to some greater or lesser extent, it would have become subject to all Treasury and similar restraints. Then it would have been placed in the same position as the SEC [the US regulatory agency] which to its irritation generates £200 million from the financial industry, but is subject to a budget ceiling of £100 million, and therefore returns half its income to the Federal government.

'At the moment we can charge the fees needed to do the job, and thus pay the salaries necessary. In present circumstances these are heftily greater than Civil Service [wages]. It's only by doing that that you get gamekeepers as good as the poachers. If John Smith and the Labour Party do what they say they're going to do, converting us from what we are at the moment into a position similar to the BBC; then when things are tight, our budget will be cut, which would be quite fatal. The reason the DTI has failed to do the job properly is because it hasn't been able to attract adequate staff either in number or expertise.'

As will be evident, Gower's views are not those of either the Labour Party or the *NS*. But they should be accorded some respect — by a combination of intellect and astute political skill he has emerged a victor (to date) over a recidivist City, 'I'm happier at the way it's gone. It's been a hard struggle to persuade a totally unregulated system to toe the line but it's happened.' ●

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ECONOMICS

In 1986 monetarists ran up the white flag

Will Hutton

1986 IS A watershed year. It is the year the government gave up the idea that the economy need not be managed. It is the year we learnt that the City is a force for bad. The detritus of former Gods still litter the field of economic debate, but do not be deceived. An economic Rubicon has been crossed; laissez-faire and monetarism as lodestars of policy have been left behind, even if there is no agreement on their successors. We may not all be Keynesians now, but monetarists have run up the white flag. An era is over.

'It is now clear,' says the Treasury and Civil Service Committee in its review last week of the government's Autumn Statement, 'that in the key factors of public expenditure control, reduction in the money supply and in the use of interest and exchange rates there has been a substantial change in policy'. In the beginning, they observe, the government's intention was clear: it was to control inflation by reducing growth of the money stock. There had to be a measure which could give the 'clearest guidance' to industry and the markets in the formulation of their expectations; this would be Sterling M3. And to make sure interest rates were not over-relied upon as means of controlling its growth, public borrowing was to be reduced. To achieve this public expenditure had to fall — especially as the government aimed to lower taxation.

Six years on, little of this, the Committee argues, remains. M3 targets are missed or suspended. Public spending is openly being allowed to grow and limits breached. The exchange rate is invoked as a new monetary indicator although no targets for its level are admitted. Of the old landscape only PSBR targets remain, however meaningless. They are there because if they were suspended the Emperor really would be seen to have no clothes. But do not be fooled. This has become a naked Emperor.

To understand why, it is not enough to itemise the government's unexplained 'modifications'; challenge Mr Lawson or Mr Burns, the government's chief economic adviser, on those, and as the Committee find you enter a serpentine labyrinth. Public spending rising? But, they reply, it is falling as a proportion of GDP. Sterling M3 targets effectively abandoned? The financial revolution has intervened, comes the response, weakening relationships that seemed robust and demanding some re-evaluation. An exchange rate target? There is no target; just an assumption. To do more would make the pound easy meat for the speculators.

For every sally and probe there is an answer, and the policy as set out in 1979-80 triumphantly has the appearance of still being alive. As a performance in economic semantics it is virtuoso; but that's as much to do with the focus of the questioning as the intellectual agility of the marionettes. To get at the nature of the U turn requires analysis a level deeper; at the theory that underpinned the policy — and how it has failed.

LOOK AT the rationale of monetary policy as it was set out six years ago. The stress was on guiding 'expectations'; on establishing clear and obvious monetary measures. Targets were not an end in themselves; they were a means to influence expectations, and therefore needed to be as explicit as possible. But why were expectations so important — and how were targets supposed to influence them?

It is these questions that are at the heart of the dispute between the 'Keynesians' and the old classical tradition in economics — even if many contemporary Keynesians neglect the processes by which Keynes demonstrated that the market economy has no spontaneous tendency to produce the best out-turn. The issue is not whether an increase in the stock of money produces some increases in prices, but how it does; and most importantly of all, whether it can do so systematically. The Keynesian position is that it cannot; the classical position is that it must, otherwise there is no predictability in markets at all. The discovery of the last six years is that Keynes was right.

> ***If Mr Lawson has discovered the Keynesian necessity of activist economic management, he has also discovered the obstacle Keynes judged most important of all — the City***

Expectations and how they are formulated are central to this debate. In the Keynesian world the future is a problem. A fall in price may not persuade me to buy more today if I expect a further price fall tomorrow; in other words there is no given price for which I can always say I will demand the same. My demand will vary as my expectations change, and because I am animal, beset by the dark forces of time and ignorance, my expectations will change.

All is uncertain and what happens in markets may turn out to be irrational; unemployed men may be left unemployed despite their willingness to work for low wages. In the classical world this is inadmissible. If a fall in price does not persuade me to buy more there are only two explanations; it needs to fall further or I am making a mistake. But I would not systematically make mistakes, therefore it needs to fall further. Markets work just as the textbooks say they should, and if unemployed men are left unemployed that is because they choose to stay that way — or their wage needs to fall more.

This conclusion stands as long as it can be supposed I do not systematically make mistakes; that I would revise patterns of behaviour that lead me to lose money. Superficially this looks plausible; and it was the thinking that lay behind the government's desire in 1979 and '80 to set out targets; for monetary growth, for public borrowing, for public spending. If a monetary target of 10 per cent was declared and workers paid themselves 15 per cent then less of them could earn it, and unemployment would rise; next year, when the new monetary target was declared, they would modify their behaviour and take notice of it, anxious not to make the same mistake. In this way inflation would fall.

Six years on, inflation has fallen, but without any notable modification of wage-earners' behaviour or success in hitting monetary targets. Shaping expectations through hitting predeclared targets has been irrelevant. Nor is there any systematic relationship between money supply and inflation, just as Keynes predicted. It has mattered more who has held the money, for what purpose, and what they next expected to do with it in a highly uncertain world. The overhang of liquidity may become highly inflationary; or it may not — it's all a matter of judgment. The Chancellor's judgment is that it will not, and he assures us he will act if it does; a proactive, Keynesian position if there ever was one. Time was when he would have been content to stand by his clear and obvious M3 target; now discretion is the new order of the day.

AS IN MONETARY, so in fiscal policy. Lowering public borrowing was identified as the means of hitting monetary targets without over-reliance on high interest rates; but now that monetary conditions are a matter of judgement so is the PSBR. If the Chancellor wants to reflate the economy, he simply boosts asset sales or calls in loans which allows him to spend more or tax less and still meet his PSBR target. According to the Select Committee, the economy is in the middle of a two year reflationary boost of £4 billion and all with the PSBR supposedly falling. Putting the economy on money supply, spending and borrowing auto-pilots has been jettisoned; and more importantly, the theory with it.

But if Mr Lawson has discovered the Keynesian necessity of activist economic management, he has also discovered the obstacle Keynes judged most important of all — the City.

Again, in the classical economist's view, the City cannot and should not be a problem. Currency misalignment, misjudged take-over activity, short-term lending and investment characterise this universe that should be the classical economist's dream; instead it's a Keynesian nightmare in which every player is looking to guard his liquidity and sees the long term as a series of short terms.

Small wonder that Mr Lawson should identify 'short-termism' as most virulent of all in the City; he is right. But in so doing he has demonstrated that his preoccupations are now Keynesian; his next step is to will the means. If the events of 1976 heralded a decade of 'monetarism', the events of this year promise to herald a decade of something very different. □

Will Hutton reports on economics for BBC 2 Newsnight. *He is the author of* The Revolution That Never Was, *Longman, £5.95.*

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DEFENCE

'A radical policy to address our times'

Taking up the challenge set by last week's debate on Labour defence policy in the pages of the* New Statesman, MARY KALDOR *argues that 'a radical shift in Britain's stance could mark the beginning of new process of detente within Europe'

REYKJAVIK, according to *New Statesman* editor John Lloyd in his editorial two weeks ago, gave us a most tantalising glimpse of the possibility of scaling down the arsenals. Is this not exactly what arms control talks are meant to do? To keep us in suspense. To keep us hoping. To provide a cover for the scaling up of arsenals.

Thirty years or so of bilateral arms control talks have been peppered with tantalising glimpses and accompanied by continuous armament. What Reykjavik really showed us was *not* the possibility of reaching agreement to disarm but the hopelessness of expecting that disarmament can be achieved through summits. Indeed, it is rather naive to suppose that a very complex process like the arms race involving industrial interest, military and bureaucratic intrigue, as well as alliance politics, can be reversed in a few hours of discussion between two men who are themselves victims of that process.

Labour's non-nuclear defence policy offers a way out of the bilateral log jam. John Lloyd writes that, 'on the available evidence', unilateralism is not the best way of achieving disarmament. But what is this evidence? There is plenty of evidence that bilateral and multilateral efforts have failed. And these efforts have always provided an argument against undertaking unilateral initiatives. But there are very few examples of unilateral initiatives. President Nixon's decision to dismantle the US biological weapons stockpile in 1969 is one such example. The consequence was the biological Weapons Convention, said to be the only disarmament treaty ever to have been concluded. The current Soviet test moratorium is another example. It has not achieved its ends but it has provided a political signal of Soviet sincerity concerning arms control and has forced the US Administration to rethink its proposals on testing.

The goal of Labour's defence policy is to shift NATO strategy away from reliance on the first use of nuclear weapons towards a strategy of non-provocative defence or defensive deterrence. The argument is that the main way to prevent a war in Europe is political, to find some *modus vivendi* with the Eastern part of the continent. At present, NATO's strategy is very threatening towards the East. The build-up of nuclear weapons exacerbates the underlying political conflict and provides a legitimation for the Soviet presence in Eastern Europe.

A non-provocative defence policy would require sufficient conventional forces to make attack by an enemy a highly risky undertaking. At the same time, it would signal a political intention to seek a rapprochement with the East and an alternative security system for Europe that does not presuppose a permanent confrontation. This concept of non-provocative defence is shared by several European Labour and Social Democrat parties, especially the Danish and West German Social Democrats.

Labour is proposing to prod the collective process of changing NATO strategy by abandoning its own nuclear weapons and by removing American nuclear weapons on British territory. In addition to the independent deterrent, Polaris and its replacement Trident, Britain deploys its own nuclear weapons and dual-control American nuclear weapons in its two main NATO roles: anti-submarine warfare and convoy protection in the Eastern Atlantic and Channel areas; and the defence of 70 kilometres of the intra-German border by the British Army of the Rhine and RAF Germany. American nuclear weapons are stored at Holy Loch for the American Poseidon submarines, at Greenham Common for cruise missiles, at Upper Heyford and Lakenheath for F-111s, at Alconbury and Bentwaters for other aircraft, and St Mawgan and Machrihanish for US, British and Dutch naval aircraft. Altogether, this amounts to some 1000 to 2000 nuclear warheads — mostly American.

THIS LARGE REDUCTION of nuclear weapons, even so, is not militarily significant. There is such a degree of overkill on both sides that even very large unilateral reductions cannot affect the ability of each side to destroy each other. Chernobyl was equivalent to a very small nuclear weapon, about 0.1 kilotons of explosive energy. The total stockpiles of the world amount to some 16 million kilotons. Moreover, NATO possesses a formidable array of conventional armament. Whatever the pundits say, ask any NATO commander if he would like to swap conventional forces with the Warsaw Pact.

A big reduction of nuclear weapons is, however, an important political statement. It might well turn out to be the most important breakthrough in East-West relations since the war. It would be a statement of independence by Britain, of readiness to take responsibility for our own security, and to take independent steps towards detente and disarmament. Such a statement would have profound consequences on the policies of other West European governments. Kinnock is quite right when he says that it is Mrs Thatcher

Melanie Friend

Mary Kaldor makes a forceful (but non-provocative) point

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who is isolated in Western Europe, today. Most West European governments are uncomfortable with current American military policies.

It is Mrs Thatcher who took the lead in supporting President Reagan over the Strategic Defence Initiative, the raids on Tripoli, and the deployment of binary nerve gases in Europe. The Germans, and on occasion the Italians, have somewhat reluctantly followed her lead. The non-nuclear members of NATO (Canada, Norway, Denmark and Spain) and the countries moving towards a non-nuclear position (Holland and Greece) may well be more sympathetic than the editorial anticipates towards a policy undertaken by one of the more powerful European NATO members which is aimed at initiating a transformation of European security.

It is worth noting that Greece and Holland, in modest ways, have set a precedent for Labour's policy. Greece has renegotiated the base agreement with the United States so that nuclear weapons can be removed after a specified period. The Dutch right-wing coalition government decided to abandon two of Holland's nuclear tasks when it agreed in November 1985 to accept cruise missiles. In particular, Holland will be abandoning its Atlantic nuclear tasks, in which it collaborates with Britain.

A new process of detente

A radical shift in Britain's stance with the tolerance, if not co-operation, of at least some NATO members could mark the beginning of a new process of detente within Europe that is much more deeply rooted than anything which could be created by bilateral talks between the super powers. British nuclear disarmament is a political statement about Western intentions towards the East. It is not a statement about capabilities. So long as the West maintains a confrontational posture through reliance on nuclear arms, Soviet hawks can justify new military acquisitions or continued oppression in Eastern Europe.

A more conciliatory stance could provide conditions which allow for political changes in the East that might have an effect on Western perceptions equivalent to the effect of British nuclear disarmament on Eastern perceptions. Indeed it could be important for the Labour Party to begin to think about and discuss what such political changes might involve: substantial troop withdrawals from Eastern Europe, the removal of nuclear weapons from the GDR and Czechoslovakia, tolerance of autonomous peace groups, or the legalisation of Solidarity, for example. It is this kind of reciprocal political process that is more important than 'equal and verifiable reductions in armaments', emphasised by John Lloyd.

A NEW DETENTE would involve a mixture of unilateral, bilateral and multilateral arms limitation measures, new forms of East-West co-operation, as well as increased space for liberalisation and pluralism within Eastern Europe as began to occur in some countries during the detente period of the 1970s. Such a process has to involve individual European governments as well as citizens, social movements and political parties, if it is to begin to challenge the Cold War in Europe. The SPD-SED agreements on a chemical weapon-free zone and a battlefield nuclear weapon-free corridor in Central Europe, the Nordic and Balkan nuclear-free zones, the WTO statement of 11 June 1986 which calls for substantial conventional troop reductions and a shift towards defensive postures on both sides, are all examples of the kind of developments that might contribute to a new detente.

I am very sceptical about whether any of these developments could come about if we confine ourselves to the bilateral route and insist on maintaining the coherence and 'internal unity' of the 'two great alliances' as the editorial proposes. Words like 'orderly' and 'stable' are status quo words. The argument against unilateralism is a profoundly undemocratic argument. The argument that was used to deploy cruise missiles was that NATO must demonstrate its capacity to execute its decision, even if public opinion in all five deployment countries is opposed to that decision. Unity comes before public opinion. It is a way of saying that bureaucratic decision-making in Brussels or Washington should have more political weight than public discussion. And if we leave detente and disarmament to the bureaucracies in Brussels and Washington, and in Moscow for that matter, we can wait for ever.

For those of us who were born after the war, the division of Europe seems like an inevitability. Challenging the doctrine of alliance unity, asserting sovereignty over security issues seems fraught with nameless dangers, or so John Lloyd implies, and this is perhaps what he fears the electorate thinks. Change is always frightening. But it is not at all clear what these dangers are. Nothing terrible happened when de Gaulle withdrew France from NATO 20 years ago. What frightens me is the consequences of *not* challenging the status quo. The danger of war lies in the manipulation of war fever, nationalism or anti-communism as a way of dealing with social and economic problems. In the coming years, with mass unemployment, urban violence and growing dissatisfaction in the East, we have to find new non-military ways of managing change in Europe.

It is easy enough to proclaim a commitment to world peace, as John Lloyd proposes. It was President Reagan, after all, who called the MX missile the peace keeper. But to be convincing, commitment has to be expressed by action. For the first time since 1945, the Labour Party is united behind a radical policy which could begin to address the most pressing problem of our time. This policy is the outcome of several years of discussion and argument within the party and of pressure from the biggest social movement to have emerged in the post-war period. A reading of Labour's defence documents, including the one launched last week, really shows that considerable thought and effort has gone into the making of the policy; it is far more logical, coherent and convincing than either the Alliance defence document or the government's White Papers.

To suggest that Labour should change its policy a few months before the election is merely to join the chorus of ignorant right-wing newspapers who refuse to engage in serious discussion with the Labour Party. If the *New Statesman* is in earnest about defeating Thatcher, it ought to elaborate and explore Labour's defence policy so that readers can counter misconceptions about Labour's defence policy and argue effectively on the doorstep. □

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About time, Barclays

IAN WILLIAMS, *from an inglenook in the pub, and for a pint of Higson's, pulls out his campaign medals and remembers Liverpool's Boer wars of 1970*

WHILE THE STUDENTS of Paris riot on the boulevards to preserve the gains of 1968, the Liverpool 10 can belatedly report 'mission accomplished' with the news of Barclays Bank's disinvestment in South Africa. The Liverpool how many? you ask, scanning the books in between the Tolpuddle Six, and the Bermondsey Eight, or even the Heinz 57 (one of the bigger demonstrations). We, the Liverpool Ten, were among the first casualties of the war against Barclays Boer connections: suspended or expelled for demonstrating against Liverpool university's investment in the bank.

As with all old campaigners, whether from the Boer or Barclays war, memories fade, details blur and the sequences of events slither insubstantially in the morass of time. History always gives the bureaucrats a good deal because the written lie is so much more convincing in its economy than the oral truth. And since it is in the very nature of dissidence and rebellion that anything you write will be brought up in evidence against you, posterity is traditionally ruled by the official pen-pushers. So the more knowledgable can feel free to differ on the details I write about.

It began in March 1970. A motley group of Trotskyists, Liberals, Labourites and Christians, not to mention anarchists and Maoists (myself), were startled by an unprecedented majority vote at a mass meeting of Liverpool University's Guild of Undergraduates. We won. The name of the students' union gives the flavour of the place. The Medical and Engineering departments were filled with academic rednecks who thought Harold Wilson was a communist plot. Most of them probably joined MI5 and are writing their memoirs now.

We *always* lost the votes, so the majority decision to occupy the Senate House in support of our five demands came as a considerable shock. So much so that it induced a chronic and continuing form of amnesia. I don't believe that any of us could remember more than four of the five demands at any given time. The two most memorable were for the liquidation of the university's investments in companies like Barclays with South African connections, which we have perhaps just won — and 'no victimisation', which we lost.

Then came our demand that the university open the secret files. They probably didn't have files on any of us, but Warwick students had asked for theirs, so we thought we'd better show solidarity and ask for ours. Our fourth demand was for an end to chemical and biological warfare contracts which the university was working on. We weren't sure what they meant, but felt that Porton Down's interest in the electrophoretic behaviour of bacteria was unlikely to be a good thing, even for bacteria.

The fifth demand has escaped my memory yet again, which shows how traumatic winning a vote sixteen years ago could be. A phone round of other participants revealed a suspicion that it may have been a call for the resignation of our profoundly reactionary Chancellor, Lord Salisbury (Salisbury as in Harare).

THE CROWDED 1970 meeting's decision to occupy the Senate House was swayed by an impassioned speech from Jon Snow, who made a lot more impression on the broad masses of students than did the rest of us, who had been calling for occupations over one thing or another with a frequency matched only by our ineffectuality.

Two incurably optimistic female students had even locked themselves in the lavatories of Senate House to let us in. But the authorities had been as cynically sure about the voting results as we hardened leftists. The doors were unguarded when the students poured through, armed with the mass-meeting mandate. Shortly afterwards, all the staff were evacuated to protect them from rape, loot, pillage or political indoctrination. Once in the place there were elections for a committee, and since there were ten nomimations, the committee became ten strong, elected as much by lottery as ballot.

> ***'They probably didn't have files on any of us, but Warwick students had asked for theirs, so we thought we'd show solidarity and ask for ours'***

Student rebellion was an unpractised art, so we missed the point about sit-ins, and refused to allow the officials' re-entry. The one serious attempt to come in was by the Vice-Chancellor who counted on his authority and dignity to crush opposition. His raid was thwarted and his dignity deflated by Peter Creswell, who paid with expulsion. The establishment's dignity was also grievously assaulted by one of our first acts. To show we were there, we hoisted a large red flag on top of the building. The flag led to an early split in the ranks, provoking some of the most acerbic debates in the ongoing mass meeting which ran the place. Jon Snow, who was strong on South Africa, but weak on Marxism-Leninism, was vociferously unhappy about it. Perhaps anticipating his need for an American visa in years to come he spoke fiercely about the iniquity of the flag which had insulted Czechoslovakia only two years before.

In the best spirit of dialectical disingenuousness, the revolutionary left unearthed a series of tenuous justifications for the real reason we wanted it flying up there. After all, for many of us South Africa was just another field of struggle against imperialism, capitalism, and authority. We invoked the Paris Commune, the struggle for an eight-hour day in Chicago, and my contribution, dredged from an obscure recess of the memory, was that the red flag was flown by Rienzi during the medieval Rome Commune.

We won the votes, but the flag annoyed more than Jon. The University kept sending snatch squads of engineers and medics to haul it down. I'd been made committee member in charge of security, so we organised patrols of the roof. The flag was stolen at least twice, but we always had replacements, so that when the dawn broke, symbolically at least, 'the flag was still there'. Even after all these years, the most vivid memory for many people is that red flag provocatively flaunting itself here for three weeks.

The second day, they switched the heating off. As committee member for security, I was forced to inform the authorities that students were moving leaky paraffin heaters into the basement to keep warm. Why *leaky* paraffin heaters? Because that was the only kind we could afford, we told them. Why in the basement? Didn't we know that computers down there needed controlled humidity? Yes, we acknowledged, delighted that the information we had from an ASTMS steward was accurate. We left in the confident and soon to be realised expectation that we would be warm again. We were, but when it was all over, one of the charges against me was on the lines of 'Threatened arson'.

AT THE END of three weeks it came to the Easter vacations, so the hard core of three hundred who'd sat it out decided that now was the time to go. As we marched out, on the roof tops opposite cameras were rolling, and from the windows revenge was being plotted.

In the time-honoured colonial tradition of collective hut-burning, all ten members of the committee were summoned. Invoking unsuspected portions of the university's charter, a court was convened and a barrister retained to charge the ten with a motley assortment of misdeeds. The real purpose was of course that as committee members they had our names. So, along with the exuberantly guilty like myself, there was the innocent first year student who was put on the committee by his mates, played the guitar for the duration — and was then suspended for a year. Pete was expelled, Jon Snow got a year, while the rest of us got two years with no remission for good behaviour.

We fought back. There was a May Day Strike called by the Trades Council which added us to their list of demands; we moved the liquidation of the student union's investments; and even carried an as yet unimplemented amendment that the money be given to the ANC 'to buy arms'. But it was all in vain. The sentences remained as did the Chancellor and the investments, and the CBW contracts. They probably actually started secret files as a result of the action!

A few natives like myself had good reasons for staying in our home town, but a surprising number of the occupants of Senate House stayed on, with or without degrees, in Liverpool, and are still active in good causes. Others left to be barristers, newscasters and the like. But the world has changed. The pessimists in the occupation thought that the revolution mightn't happen for a decade, while today's optimists think that things won't get any worse.

So news of our belated victory with Barclays is a ray of sunshine, even if it owes more to the blacks of South Africa than anything we did. We tried! □

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EDUCATION

So how do we raise the next generation?

Rows over campus free speech, corporal punishment, and sex education dogged the erratic progress of this year's Education Bill. And there was a new Secretary: Kenneth Baker.* PETER WILBY *spells out the vision — a new partnership between parents and central government — infusing the biggest postwar governmental intervention in the schools

EDUCATION, once a political backwater, is set to become one of the central issues of the next general election. This is not just because parents have been irritated to distraction by teachers' strikes. It is because education combines some of the central concerns of Thatcherism.

A publicly-financed industry which is run by local authorities and dominated by powerful unions, which lacks even the benchmarks for measuring efficiency, which offers secure employment to hundreds of thousands of people, which has been permeated by anti-authority attitudes: it is hard to imagine anything more repugnant to the Thatcherite mind.

Our education system is a monument to the post-War Butskellite consensus. Comprehensives, which were justified on social as well as educational grounds, were introduced by Tory as well as Labour authorities; when Margaret Thatcher herself was education secretary in the early 1970s, the momentum was such that more comprehensives were opened than at any period before or since. The present system of student grants, which turns half-a-million of the nation's brightest young people into state pensioners, was introduced by a Conservative government in the heyday of Butskellism in the early 1960s.

So education is a natural target for this government. But it goes deeper than that. Successive governments have failed to make the slightest impact on certain long-term post-war trends in the British economy: the rise in unemployment and the decline in the export of manufactured goods. Different economic, fiscal and industrial policies may effect temporary changes, but the underlying trends remain the same. Politicians, therefore, inevitably look for deeper explanations. Is our education system at fault? Can reform at schools, universities and polytechnics arrest decline? Should there be a stronger emphasis on 'designing and making' skills, on vocational training, on technical education? These questions were initiated not by the Conservatives but by James Callaghan in a celebrated speech at Ruskin College, Oxford, in 1976. The 'great debate' that he started has never really been concluded. The specifically Thatcherite concerns about education have been superimposed on more long-term and more widely-shared concerns.

The schools, particularly in the conurbations, have faced the demands of yet another perspective, with quite different priorities. According to this view, the Butskellite education system has failed even in its own terms. It has not closed the gap in achievement between working-classes and middle-classes. New inequalities, between black and white, between boys and girls, have come to the forefront. Changes in educational *structure* have proved ineffective; therefore, changes in educational *process* (to borrow the jargon) are needed. The day-to-day classroom relationships between pupils and teachers, as well as the curriculum, are under scrutiny. Anti-racist and anti-sexist policies, adopted by such authorities as Manchester, Bradford, Haringey, Brent and Inner London, are designed to change the teachers, not just the schools they work in.

> ***'The twists and turns of the past seven years should not blind people to the revolutionary intentions of this government'***

The growing crisis in the schools is impossible to understand without grasping how these conflicting demands have created stresses and strains. Poor pay is only partly responsible for the unrest of the past year. The teachers' mood is one of cynicism and defeatism. Whatever they do, they feel, they are damned.

BUT AS President Reagan might put it, they ain't seen nothing yet.

Throughout the past seven years, Tory education policies have been a curious mixture of the pragmatically necessary and the ideologically contingent. The necessity for reforming 16-plus exams and teacher training, for example, had been widely recognised for many years. There were arguments over the methods but it was Sir Keith Joseph's triumph as education secretary that he brushed these aside and got things moving. Indeed, nearly all Joseph's reforms did have some pragmatic justification. Ironically, the supposedly pragmatic ministers — Mark Carlisle before Joseph, Kenneth Baker after him — have introduced the more ideological policies. Carlisle was responsible for the assisted places scheme, offering government subsidies for bright children to attend public schools. Now, Baker plans his city technology colleges.

The technology aspect, admittedly, echoes the 'great debate' concerns. But other aspects of the colleges are specifically Thatcherite. They will be sponsored by private industry; they will be free of local authority control; they will select 'motivated' children from 'supportive' families (in other words, people who conform to 'self-help' ideals); they will employ teachers on their own terms, outside nationally-agreed pay rates and conditions of service. They will be financed by central government, according to the number of pupils they attract, thus adding to 'parent power' and making the future of the colleges directly dependent on their market success. Their curriculum will be decided by central government, too. Baker has already published a 'possible curriculum', which envisages pupils spending 10 per cent of the timetable on 'business understanding and personal development'.

Baker has described the colleges as 'prototypes'. They are just one stage along a Tory road to dismantling the powers of local education authorities. Already, the Manpower Services Commission finances certain vocational work in schools and colleges by direct grant. The government has acquired powers to use 1 per cent of the education budget for its own directly-financed projects, such as in-service training for teachers and the development of courses in 'economic awareness'. Now, Baker is putting a Bill through Parliament usurping the rights of local authorities to negotiate pay with their own employees. Once the Burnham pay machinery is abolished, he will determine the structure of teachers' pay and their working conditions and local authorities will be reduced to a 'consultative' role.

Baker may go further still. He is taking particular interest in proposals that schools should control their own budgets, so that they can employ an extra teacher rather than buying new laboratory equipment, buy an extra set of library books rather than decorating the classrooms. He speculates that, within the next decade, schools could even set their own teachers' pay rates, thus allowing the free market to determine rewards unencumbered by bureaucracy or collective bargaining.

In his view, this would instantly solve the specific problems created by the current levels of

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teachers' pay: the shortages of maths and physics teachers, the lack of incentives for the bright and ambitious, the difficulties of recruitment in the inner cities, the counter-attractions for teachers in high employment areas. Schools could use pay incentives to cope with such problems as and when they arose.

ULTIMATELY, Baker envisages the state sector being turned into a network of semi-private concerns, each receiving a grant according to the number of children it attracts. Headmasters will be managing directors; parents and local industrialists will comprise the boards of directors (or governors); the government will be a sort of parent company, laying down objectives through a national curriculum. If he could sell this vision, Baker could wean Thatcher from her long-standing commitment to vouchers. Local authorities would be reduced to clerks and messengers. Effective control would be in the hands of a new partnership between parents and central governments: a dream of democratic harmony or a Poujadist nightmare, depending on how you look at it.

It is easy to see how selection could creep into this new education system. There should be no doubt that, in contrast to their Butskellite predecessors, members of this government crave the return of grammar schools. They have tried it once, through the local authority system, and failed. Tory-controlled Solihull, prompted by ministers and their advisers, attempted to dismantle its comprehensive system, only to run into vocal parental opposition in a solidly middle-class area. Semi-private schools, accountable only to themselves and to the market, need not bother with the niceties of local democracy.

The Tories could then reintroduce grammar schools without ever announcing (and putting to the democratic test) the end of the comprehensives. Likewise, many schools, finding government grants per pupil inadequate, might decide to charge fees so that they could provide more facilities or smaller classes. Indeed, some public school heads are already talking of their role in Baker's brave new world. If 'state' schools were allowed to manage their own budgets, to charge fees and to select children, what possible objection could Eton or Rugby have to joining them in return for the government subsidies?

All this is far in the future. But it is the inexorable direction of Tory policies and ideologies. The twists and turns of the past seven years should not blind people to the revolutionary intentions of this government, nor should Baker's bland exterior and middle-of-the-road reputation disguise the implications of his policies. And the crisis in the schools suits him nicely: demoralised teachers, poorly-paid, struggling with inadequate resources, widely blamed for economic and social ills, criticised by left as well as right, are sitting ducks. As Tories frequently remind us, revolutionaries start by destabilising established institutions and undermining public confidence in them. Add Baker's agenda to that outlined by such Labour authorities as Brent, Haringey and Manchester and the schools are set to become the ideological battlegrounds of the next decade. □

Peter Wilby is Education Editor of the Independent.

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

The year of flying consciously

Alexei Sayle

FOR ME the memory of this year is of being suspended above clouds, a deep feeling of serenity suffusing my mind. It is not that I have become a mystic or a drug addict but rather that I have lost my fear of flying.

I acquired the aforementioned phobia skimming into Varna Airport in Bulgaria. Ostensibly I was in Bulgaria with my parents for a holiday at the Black Sea resort of Slumpny Dumpny (Golden Cod). I say 'ostensibly' because as I am in a mood for confession, I may as well reveal that I am in fact the notorious 'Fifth Man'. This is the fact the British government has been fighting to conceal.

I was recruited into the Russian Intelligence Service in 1959 when I was aged seven by Kim Philby, while I was at a North West Area meeting of the Woodcraft Folk (the paramilitary arm of the Co-op). For years I passed on details of the timetable at Anfield Road Junior School to the KGB. The Politburo was kept informed of all the nicknames of the teachers, the temper of the lollipop woman and the outrageous price of sherbet in Liverpool 4. Later when I passed the 11 plus my greatest scoop was to inform my control accurately, in advance, of the likely 'O' level History questions.

However, I digress. There was something about the rudimentary construction of the Bulgarian Airlines Kerensky IL20 which gave me a terrible feeling of dread and fear of flying which, until earlier this year, I have been unable to shake off. This is not to say that I haven't flown. I have to fly for my work. I have travelled by air to the United States where I work frequently and am a big star, to Australia, Finland, Spain etc. But in order to fly I would have to take a cocktail of drugs — a mixture of a tranquiliser, usually Ativan, and a drug called Propananol, commonly known as Beta-blockers.

Taking these drugs meant that I could fly, or indeed sky-dive if I wanted to, but there could be side-effects. Having overdosed rather on a flight from Australia I terrorised an entire Jumbo Jet, first by sitting in my seat with my anorak hood backwards on my head and my headphones on top of the hood, yelling a song at the top of my voice; then by searching all over the plane for a small dog I was certain had been hidden somewhere aboard. Anybody who has seen me at an airport terminal, draped over a luggage trolley and trundling it about on tiptoe, bonking into walls, will now know the reason why.

However, by and large, I was happy with this situation. It was only when I flew into Miami, Florida, in January this year to make a film that things really started to go wrong. One of the problems with tranquilisers is that it is difficult to know when they have been flushed out of the system. I would often come to in an important meeting or on location halfway up a mountain without the slightest idea what I'd been up to minutes before. (Although others who'd been present at these blackouts always seemed at pains to keep carrots out of my way.)

The day after my arrival in Murder City, USA, I took a walk into town passing through the largely black-populated Flagler Street district, fairly safe during the day but extremely dangerous at night. Suddenly I developed this terrible urge to imitate the street people I was passing. 'Yo dude! How's ya momma?' I started shouting, talking and walking in bad imitation of one of Kool and the Gang. 'Wass happenin Jim? Ya mofo man! Solid! solid ma man jest solid!' I squawked before my wife bundled me into a taxi and drove ma ass at high speed outta der.

From this euphoria I was plunged into terrible gloom, although whether this was the drugs or Miami, which is the most awful place in the world, it's hard to say. After returning to England and eight weeks of jet-lag I resolved — no more pills. But how was I to fly?

I FINALLY opted to try hypnotism. Every week I would go to see this man in Wimpole Street. I'd sit in an old fashioned armchair covered in doilies, he'd count from one to ten, I'd close my eyes and we'd be off.

After doing various relaxation exercises I would then be told to imagine that I was in a plane flying happily along. To enhance the effect the hypnotist used a couple of cheap 'Boots' brand tape recorders to provide sound effects. When I was imagining myself in the departure lounge he would play the noise of crowds and the clank of luggage trolleys, when the imaginary plane was taking off he would provide the noise of screaming revving jet engines and so on. We travelled all over the world in my mind. Every week my friends would ask which country I'd been to and then complain that I hadn't bought them any duty-frees.

The only problem was that the eminent hypnotist would sometimes get his tapes mixed up so that while I was imagining as hard as I could that I was over the Bay of Biscay tucking into Shrimps Montego he would suddenly play the sound effects tape for Terminal Three of Heathrow. Suddenly my imaginary plane would be flooded with the sound of bing-bong announcements and arguing families. This caused me great confusion — flying but not flying, on the ground but not on the ground, in Wimpole Street but not in Wimpole Street.

The strange thing is it worked. I now fly everywhere. In fact in order to achieve the serenity I now feel while flying I fly to places it is completely pointless to fly to. I bet you've never heard of Birkenhead's Hatton International Airport, or Derby Intercontinental — Terminal Six. But I've been there. I may have to take to hypnotism again to stop flying. □

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THE AFFECTIONS

'Young flesh had never seemed so vulnerable'

In 1986 — because, it is said, government chief medical officer Sir Donald Acheson made direct representations to Downing St — the Cabinet at last began a serious effort to guide and warn in the face of Aids.

PAUL HALLAM ***on how fear came nearer and nearer***

MONDAY 26 MAY 1986: I arrive early for the 'candlelight gathering of remembrance, care and concern', a vigil for Aids organised by the Terrence Higgins Trust, 'Bring a candle'. That week a friend of a friend, a gay man with Aids, had organised his last requests; he and his lover later committed suicide. And then, an extra from a film I'd worked on asked during that same week to see some of the outtakes, footage of a Brixton gay commune he'd been a part of, though we were told the request was probably too late, he'd soon be blind or dead; it was too late. Another friend of a friend was refused first an ambulance, then a burial at his local country church. His parents had to get a court injunction to overturn the church decision. Friends of friends so far, it gets closer by the week and I'm frightened.

People carrying candles on a warm summer night, an incongruous sight in Trafalgar Square. I enjoy the gathering part of demonstrations best, sorting spectators from participants, pleased if I guess wrong. About two thousand turn up. I note the variety of candles, from basic white to designer types. Some remind me of the Sixties, the multicoloured sort you might read Tolkien by. And one man carries a candelabra! There are candle holders from the best of homes, others adapt their Budweiser beer cans. Braver or unprepared spirits let the wax spill on their hands. There are observations on the size of candles and on the use of candle wax in esoteric sexual practices. There is a lot of good, if uneven humour about.

As so often the speeches are the boring bit, telling you through crackling speakers what you know or would prefer to read. And tonight there is a liberal selection of religious reps, invite a Christian and you must invite a Jewish speaker etc. There are too many of them and they go on far too long. However touching and sincere their approach, I felt uneasy. I doubt the Church had offered much to most of those gathered except aggravation and abuse. Spectacle worked better than speech. The being together, more candles lit as night fell. I watch the faces, the hugging friends and couples, the tears. The moments of silence were the best, the candlelit faces did look beautiful. It was extraordinarily moving, and surely helped those whose friends had died.

There was a last minute message from the non-stop picket outside the South African Embassy. Good wishes, solidarity and an invitation to join them after. A reminder of other deaths and oppression. I hear a few complaints of the 'they always have to bring politics into it' variety. But many go over. For a moment there is a candle glow on the Embassy, and on anxious police faces, they'd not expected connections either. I stand for a few minutes in silence. Another event in an ever-changing theatre that wants its run to end. But tonight I want to be with the main mass of the marchers, walking slowly along the Strand, stopping traffic. We were marching to Heaven, Charing Cross Branch.

Brandenburg and John

Heaven, the gay ultradisco, opened its gates free of charge. Some couldn't stand the idea and went home. Most of us were intrigued. Here were new ways of mourning, new forms of remembrance. Gays have never been very welcome with their pink triangles at Remembrance services. What would they do at their own event? Candles were stll burning as we arrived, the procession filling Villiers Street. 'Can I have a light, my candle's gone out?' was the night's conversational gambit. Surprisingly we were not asked to snuff them out as we entered. My most mundane thought: 'This must be a fire risk!'

But there was no bouncerly discouragement. We filed slowly through to the dancefloor. The music getting louder, not Hi-NRG, but a Bach Brandenburg! And inside a kind of disco altar on the stage, candles placed round it. Behind the stage a huge backcloth of a scene from a stained glass window. Where drag and disco divas had stood, a vicar! The reverend spoke of love and lovers. I did hear a dissenting, atheist voice, soon shushed. But the reverend was brief, and after a musical interlude of Elton John's saddest song we were into the wake proper, invited to celebrate the living. It was disco time again. If you thought Michael Foot could be tacky at Remembrance services . . .

I WANDERED round, knocking back drinks. It wasn't quite the usual crowd, but as the night wore on more flesh emerged, the occasional shirtlessness. I looked on from a balcony. In the midst of life we are in death, the last dance, the dancing days are over, dance of death. Gloomy drunken spinning thoughts. It felt terribly eerie. And what to make of Heaven? A gay club's 'concern' might be genuine, but it's not unconnected with commercial concern. In the disco shop there were safe sex T-shirts alongside the toys, the records and the magazines. Safer sex leaflets from the Trust were free, there was a rush for those.

Lights cranked down towards the dance floor. Lazers played. The red plastic collection buckets of the Trust were less modern, but effective and filling fast. My main impression was of the disco darkness, young flesh had never seemed so vulnerable. I felt immensely confused. Years ago, when my parents died, I'd looked to casual sex for consolation as well as pleasure. I also met a longterm lover at a disco, and I've certainly made friends there. But another voice came back to me, a man with Aids quoted in Dennis Altman's *Aids and the New Puritanism*. 'It's over. All that disco shit is over . . .'. Surely he'd have raged at this event.

And yet the mixture of tastelessness, care and commerce, camp, grief and celebration made it, for all its messiness, deeply affecting. It seemed a uniquely gay event. Genuine mourning, with an edgy element of parody. And an event for friends, not family. Many of those present were beginners at grief. 'If that's all there is, my friend, then let's keep dancing, bring out the booze and have a ball.'

Half-way through the year and most of my discussion of Aids had been with gay friends. Some grieving, some frightened. Everyone trying to work out what 'safesex' meant exactly. What did you do if you didn't have a lover to be faithful to? Is there any play still left in sex? Is even kissing safe? Gums bleed. Some said their dreams and even their sexual fantasies had been wrecked by Aids. Gay men were losing a role as narrators of sexual adventure. They append safety notes now, or set the story well in the past.

At the beginning of the year, in spite of the African experience and changing pattern of Aids deaths in America, I still sense a heterosexual distance. Straight friends warning me to be careful, expressing a sometimes patronising if well-intentioned concern. In the past few months many seem finally to have woken up to the risks to themselves and to their families.

LAST WEEK one of my sisters rang. A factory workmate's husband had banned a close gay relative from the house. He might have Aids, he might infect their baby. And the local Corby paper announces that shops are closing their ear-piercing facilities, judges an Aids risk. My ten year old niece wanted hers done and wanted to know why

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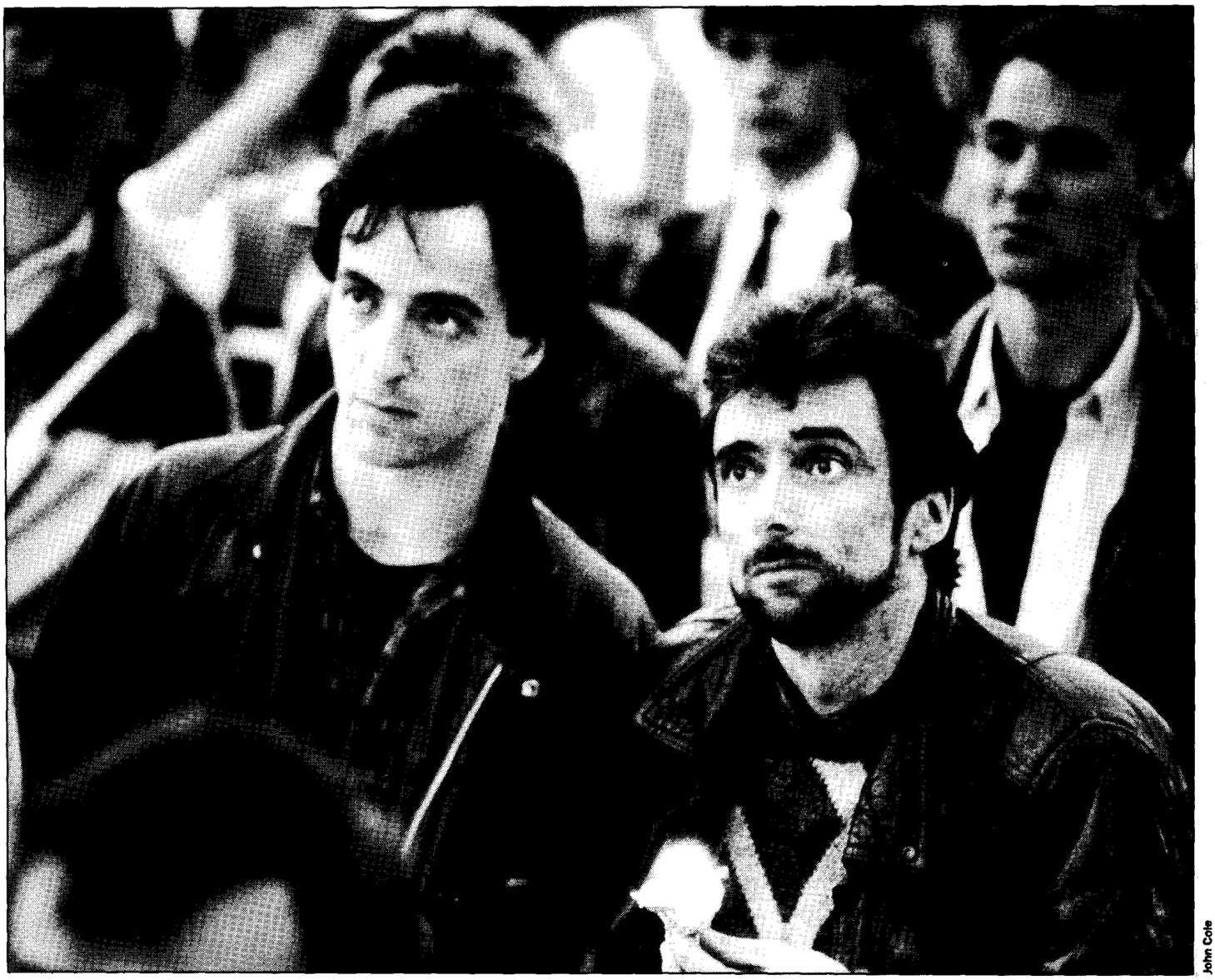

John Cole

Trafalgar Sq, May '86: The year before, the rains had fallen in torrents; few had been there. This year thousands, women, men, black, white. Gays arranged vigils on the same evening in capitals around the world. Lesbian/gay phone-lines are deluged with heterosexuals' calls for advice and help as we enter '87

she couldn't. My sister asked if she knew about Aids and did she know what gay men were? The niece had seen gay men on television, in *Dynasty* and *EastEnders*. Sister explained that gay men were most at risk. We talked, by the time her daughter is likely to be trying sex the risk could be equal amongst gays and non-gays. And after Aids, if there is an after, what will be next? The conversation started with gays, ended with everyone.

After the call I got to thinking about *EastEnders*. My niece had giggled a bit, but wasn't hostile. Angie and gay Colin's friendship must be the most important fictional friendship of 1986. It's the likeable characters from Albert Square who are keeping friendly with the gay guys. It can only help.

And I felt a rage for the banned gay man. This was the year they tried to stop children from knowing that Jenny lived with Martin and Eric. In the 1981 book a nasty neighbour comes to accept Martin and Eric on finding her husband once loved a man. The bisexual experience would worry her now, and perhaps the hostility harden. The association of gays and disease predates Aids, now Aids provides an excuse for verbal and physical violence. Many gays have seen and heard worse abuse this year than ever before, have been accused of murder. Arguments about acknowledging and accepting gays as parents and teachers, gays possibly fostering or adopting, have suffered a huge setback. On the other hand the myth of gays as child molesters seems to be dying at last. The exposure of mainly straight male abuse of children, often their own children, has received unprecedented publicity this year.

It seems to have been a year for the darker side of sex all round. And it seems to have ended with heterosexuals as confused now as gays have been for five years. Old arguments about freedom in relationships, the oppressiveness of monogamy and total fidelity, shake in the face of death. Honesty is not just who, but what exactly you did and when. Sex as something to lose yourself in, sex without fear, is obviously a thing of the past. And the young, whatever their sexuality, must be profoundly worried.

I used to think city gay life was a bit too removed. I amost missed conversations about illness, about who had died down the road. The corner shop conversation, children and the old included. Death seemed taboo, the gay scene stressed vitality and desire. I wasn't expecting the horror of Aids to change all that. I'm wary of the journalistic convenience of fixing things in particular years, but it has been a year of talking about sex, illness and death.

However much sexual habits change there is a terrible backlog of death and grief to be faced. New forms of care and concern needed, perhaps new words since the Thatcher hijack of 'care and concern'. Gays have been through and learnt a great deal in the past five years, their voices are needed in schools and in homes more than ever before. A thought unlikely to make the '87 election manifestos. □

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LOVE AFFAIRS

I'm afraid my ewing's gone and got an agip

Words fail ANDREW LUMSDEN *when it comes to describing modern romance*

'MONOGAM|Y *n.* practice or state of being married to one person at a time; (Zool) habit of having one mate at a time; hence or cogn. ~IST (2) *n.*, ~OUS *a.* [f. F. *monogamie* f. eccl. L. f. Gk MONO (*gamia* f. *gamos* marriage].' Thus the Concise OED.

I rather like the 'zool' entry with its unsanctimonious bluntness of *mate*. Curious that in ordinary English animals have mates of the other gender but human males have mates of the same: best mate. Idly I turn back a few pages to the Concise on *mates* and discover a dozen or more definitions including 'a vessel for an infusion of leaves' (Mrs Wedgie Benn's tea-drinking mate?) — though that one does take an accent over the 'e', maté — and the wonderful 'sui-mate', from chess, possibly the most exciting single entry I've ever encountered in a dictionary: 'in which player forces opponent to mate him'.

Not the first time I've felt the OED ought to be banned by Mr Secretary Baker from use in schools, and by foreign Customs authorities from import into pure-thinking countries. 'MATE *v.t. & i.* join (two persons, one *with* another) in marriage; marry (*with*, or abs.); come or bring together for breeding (of animals); pair (birds), (of birds) pair; keep company, (Mech.) fit well, (*with*). [f. prec.]'.

Here too, I feel that one entry stands out — '(Mech.) fit well'. What, after all, is the relationship of a man and his best mate? It's someone he (*mech*) interlocks with satisfactorily at pub opening hours, or going to football matches, or saying 'I don't fancy yours' to. Women are worse off when it comes to interlocking though if Americans of both sexes can be 'guys' I don't see why women shouldn't have women 'best mates'. Every woman used once to have her 'gossip' (*'n.* arch. esp. of women') who was her pal not just a conversation. Now she has her 'girl-friend' and unless that means hot lust the implication is it's what she's got till she gets a boyfriend and stops kidding around: grows up to MEN!

Pity about the gossips, because it's one of *those*, really, that most people want at every stage of life, whether it's two toddlers eyeing each other cautiously after an introduction by doting parents or Darby and Joan/Joan and Joan/Darby and Darby criticising the passing adolescents on Torquay esplanade. We all want a *gossip* (arch.) to rabbit on to: 'MONOGABB|Y *n.* practice or state of bending the ear of one person at a time; most basic human urge' (from the Not the Concise OED). Actually the OED has: 'GAB *n.* (colloq) talk, prattle, twaddle; gift of the ~ (1) talent for speaking, (2) loquacity; stop your ~, be silent [17th-c. var. of GOB]'.

To be exact, most of us, *pace* the Holy Father in Rome — and Holy Father Peter Bruinvels in the Commons — want serial monogabby: a different gossip at different times of life. It's the real reason why marriages break up, generally. The husband calls the wife a nag ('Norw. & Sw. *nagga* gnaw, irritate') meaning he isn't interested in anything she has to say, and she calls him a bore ('18th c.; orig. unkn,; early contexts suggest F deriv.'). Neither is a 'gossip' any longer ('OE *godsibb* person related to one in GOD') to the other. Frequently they've long since been committing conversational adultery elsewhere — criminal conversation, as you might say, and as the lawcourts occasionally *do* say, meaning unlawful sex. Aha!

SERIAL MONOGABBY being the primal human instinct onto which have been built all the awesome superstructures of the registry office, the divorce court, polygamy and the papal annulment, we clearly need a flood of additional terms to replace the lost and lamentably *arch.* (as said) 'my gossip'. We need them to allow handy social reference to those chatty entanglements of an — ahem! — sexually embroiled variety into which most of us tumble from time to time in life and which may have nothing to do with marriage: when, in a manner of speaking, we're not on the *gamos*.

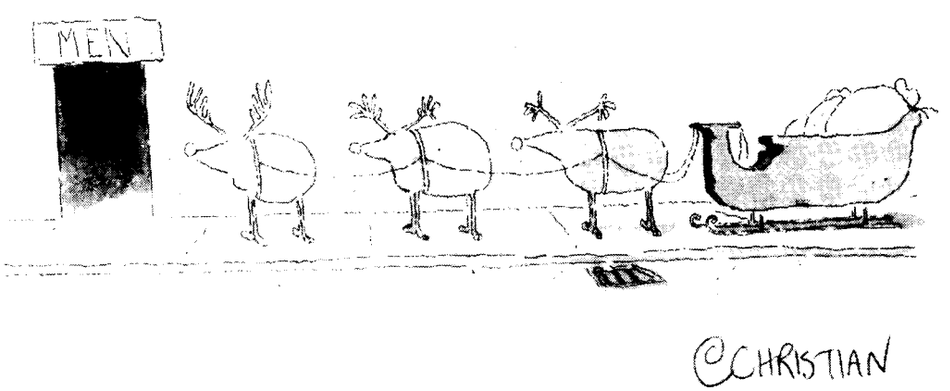
I think the petroleum industry can be of help to us here. In saying so, I'm deeply sensitive to the needs of the higher academics. Their neo-post-structuralist embarrassment, which so far as I can see leaves them without a word to wear, is relieved from this moment on: the Petroleum Fumes School of Amatory Discourse is hereby declared open, and they may plunge in, shirt-sleeves rolled to the armpits and word-processors misfiring on all cylinders. The key phrase is 'Significant Other'. For short: ESSO.

It occurs to me that you may not be familiar with Significant Other. I never did discover just how fashionable (if at all) the phrase did become c.1981 when I first heard it, and started zestfully using it till everyone begged me to stop. I gather it was Californian: one of those efforts, like 'pair-bond', to get round the difficulty that people don't fall into two perfect hemispheres, either the chaste or the monogamous, and language often falters in the attempt to refer to what's going on between two persons. 'Significant Other' carried no imputation of people living together, or even necessarily of having sex together. It skipped lightly over the amateur and unstable — *not quite grown up* — sound of 'lover' and 'boyfriend' or 'girl-friend'.

Or perhaps not so lightly. Significant Other indeed! Who can say 'may I bring my Significant Other?' when asked by strangers to supper in NI? 'Esso', though, is direct and short. Of great importance in the Western world, it also fits a headline: DIRTY DEN'S NEW ESSO! Sub-editors would glory in it. Additionally: texaco, shells, totals, agips, mobils and ewings. Further offerings from those in Maggie's share-stagging democracy who have a more gigantic grasp of the international oil 'n energy biz than I do will be welcome, and may earn an Hon.Doctorate (£50 incl. p & p) from the School of Amatory Discourse, c/o the *New Statesman*, hon patron Larry Hagman.

My own proposed definitions of the petroleum-derivative new words above are:

- esso: well, we've gone into that already.
- texaco: one of those flaming 'fast-lane' relationships, one of those 'too hot to last' Cole Porter affairs, friends and relatives all waiting with bated breath for the pile-up, and rather looking forward to it
- shell: a comfortable domesticated live-in liaison, whether married or unmarried
- total: absolute disaster, write-off relationship which goes on and on . . . and on
- agip: a foreign lover or intercontinental affair
- mobil: an esso who just won't be pinned down, isn't reliable, never breaks it off, but is never 'trustworthy'
- ewing: my favourite, I think; with its echoes of 'ewe-lamb'; someone younger and much-loved. □



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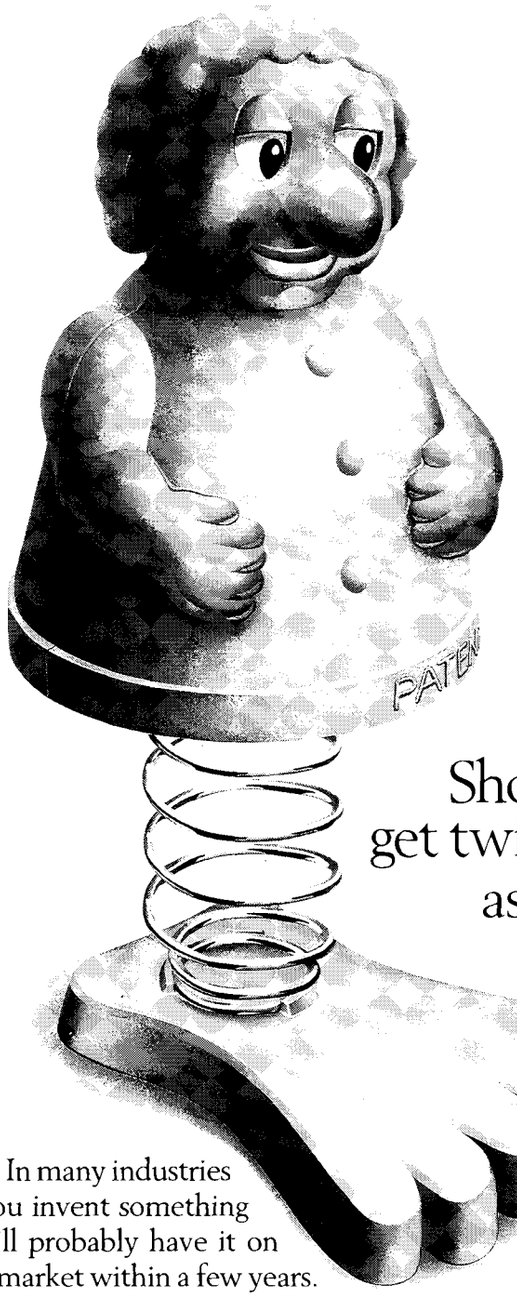

Should this invention really get twice as many years protection as a life-saving medicine?

In many industries if you invent something you'll probably have it on the market within a few years. You'll benefit from most of the 20-year UK patent term, recoup your investment, and earn a reward.

Find a new medicinal compound, on the other hand, and you'll need about 12 years of investment in proving, safety testing and development, to get it ready for general use.

That leaves only eight years to recoup the enormous investment. And some new medicines have had their effective patent term cut to four years because of unique British provisions. This erosion of effective patent life is no encouragement to search for tomorrow's better medicines.

Of course, testing and developing, whilst it takes time, is essential.

What's needed is restored patent protection for medicines.

The USA and Germany have already acted to provide a fairer environment for their medicine innovators, and Japan is now planning medicine patent reforms.

To keep our pharmaceutical sector one of the strongest in the world, Britain should do the same.

If you want to know more about the case for fairer medicine patents please write to: Gail Turner, The Health Information Desk, ABPI, 12 Whitehall, London SW1A 2DY.

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INDUSTRY

Over the rainbow, more rain probably

Between Correlli Barnett blaming British industrial decline on the welfare state and Martin Wiener anathematising 'late Victorian Bloomsbury' reveries about a rural arcadia, the year hasn't been short of 'explanations' for the national plight. Take your pick, nostrum to follow. **BEN PIMLOTT** ***argues that the vitiating nostalgia is really for our great industrial past. Labour leadership beware: the task is 'amelioration and redistribution*** **within** ***our existing resources'. But he admits it's not an easy truth to electioneer on . . .***

I HAVE two surviving memories of the economics I attempted to learn as an undergraduate. One is of a lecturer who proved, to his own satisfaction and my own, that because of the scientific discoveries of J. M. Keynes, mass unemployment could always in future be prevented by government action.

The second is of a graph plotting British and German relative economic performance over the preceding hundred years. On the left of the page, two black lines stood far apart, with Britain way ahead of its competitor. On the right, they met and crossed. In between the lines pulled ever closer together, not in jerks but steadily, the gap only momentarily widened by German defeat in two world wars.

Arguably, the contradiction between these two images of the economy — between short-term optimism and long-term decline — has befogged British politics since 1945. Recovery has always seemed just round the corner. Yet historical evidence has constantly suggested that only a nuclear bomb under the economy could prevent a continuation of the drift in the opposite direction.

For a generation or more, relative decline has been, politically speaking, centre stage, and competing formulae for the philosopher's stone of industrial revival have provided the main currency of political debate. Where, before, there had been a lack of belief in the ability of gentlemen in Downing Street and Whitehall to affect economic outcomes, since the war there has been a keen interest in a range of concoctions: Wilson's white hot heat, Heath's Common Market, Thatcher's monetarism. It is a truism that the sole product of all of them has been fool's gold. Now, with an election pending, Labour is at it again.

Paraphrased, the official line goes something like this. Labour is the red rose party. It is the party of good sense, of moderation, of all things to all persons (except on defence). But it is also something else. It is the only party that knows the secret of the universe: the only party able to bring about a proper, permanent industrial revival of a kind that will make the sinking line on the graph point upwards. That is the message of Neil Kinnock in his new book *Making Our Way*.

> If policies continue on the present course the British economy will, in the next decade or less, move into a deepening decline in which standards of living fall steeply . . . On present policies it is now no exaggeration to anticipate unemployment rising to more than five million . . . That is why the Labour Party will implement the three-stage integrated recovery programme of a two-year emergency jobs initiative, a five-year Medium-Term Employment Strategy and a ten-year Economic Planning Perspective. We need very deliberately to sponsor recovery and also to ensure that it has deep roots, both for the purpose of achieving perceptible economic advance in the medium-term and to provide a basis for continued change and improvement in our national and international performance . .

A STARK ALTERNATIVE, and a firm ambition. The aim of a Labour government, Kinnock asserts, will be 'to recover the international competitiveness that the Tories have lost', and 'attain a sustainable trend of improvement in the balance of trade and payments in manufacturing industry'.

Thus Labour's programme may be summarised, in the party leader's words, as 'a comprehensive, aggressive industrial policy, formulated with the direct purpose of achieving the resilient long-term modernisation and recovery of the British economy'.

Perhaps such language is unavoidable. A leader who did not pledge himself to the pursuit of resilient long-term modernisation, white hot heat of the technological revolution, or whatever the current jargon happened to be, might find himself in political trouble. Arguably, therefore, an innocuous aspiration shared by every premier since Sir Robert Walpole can do no harm and may save Labour from more dangerous pitfalls.

Walpole, on the other hand, never made it his central platform. Kinnock, by contrast, has placed his cure for the British disease at the very core of his offer to the voters. As a slogan for a progressive party in the late twentieth century, campaigning in the depth of a desperate industrial winter, it has a hollow, mocking sound. At best, there is an echo of the evangelist pioneers, who equated Socialism with the Second Coming. ('And lo!', declared the ILPer Bruce Glasier, before the First War, 'in yet a little while it will cause our valleys and cities to bloom anew with the glowing faces of men and women, and to be made glad with the music of children's feet'.) At worst, it is a recipe for social inaction.

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The Crosland version was that the achievement of a fast growth rate would enable you to pay for socialism out of the surplus. In practice, there was no surplus, and precious little socialism. *The Future of Socialism*, however, was the product of an age of unprecedented expansion that permitted rash hopes. The present reality is far less encouraging, and the record of past experience offers no comfort.

No previous government in this century, Labour, Liberal or Tory, has obtained resilient long-term modernisation, or anything approaching it. Of the many virtues of the five Labour governments and four Labour Prime Ministers to have held office, skill in sharpening up the economy has scarcely been most prominent.

This, it should be stressed, is not a cause for shame: on the contrary. Unlike the Tories, Labour has other things to which it can lay claim. People have been housed, lives have been saved, children have been educated and repressive legislation has been repealed, because of Labour governments. But it does cast doubt on an election platform that bases its case on something which Labour has never before been able to deliver.

Per ardua ad astra. We should give full support to a British New Deal, a busy campaign of planned investment, encouragement to industrial initiative and direct action to create jobs. But if, in the past, no Labour Chancellor has ever added a percentage point to our growth rate or improved our competitiveness an iota, we need also to ask: is it realistic to imagine that a Labour government with a slim majority or no majority at all can hold back or reverse the trend line of generations? Might it not be better (as in 1945) to put the emphasis not on economic claims of a kind that brought the 1964 administration to disillusion and ruin but on a programme of amelioration and redistribution, to be carried out within the limits of existing resources?

The case, then, is for a policy of serious radicalism, even of extremism — but a policy which does not, as in 1964, put all its eggs in one basket. Such a policy would help to combat the old conventional wisdom, of which this government has made much play, that socialism and economic success are alternatives. This notion has been linked to another: the theory of Britain's supposed 'anti-industrial culture'. Here we need to examine an interesting, positive, but symptomatic venture which is itself the product of an attitude inimical to Labour's most reasonable plans.

IN CASE you hadn't noticed, this is Industry Year. Not the year in which we all work harder or the year in which industry picks up, but consciousness-raising year, the year in which we have been made more aware of industry and its national importance. As such, it is hard not to see Industry Year as a thoroughly good thing.

Industry Year is a government-funded yet independent movement built on individual effort and goodwill. Its director, Sir Geoffrey Chandler, ex-director-general of NEDO, has everything that the leadership of British industry (allegedly) has not: energy instead of lethargy, keenness instead of dullness, open-mindedness instead of crass, inward-looking stupidity. Talk to him, and you come away lighter in your step.

The aim of Industry Year, according to Sir Geoffrey, is to provide 'a lever for attacking our anti-industrial culture'. His diagnosis is the evil of division between the worlds of industry and an industrially-philistine education system. Working from a reassuringly poky office in the cellar of the Royal Society of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce (their sponsor) in the Strand, Sir Geoffrey's tiny staff have been firing off catalysts in all directions — aimed at encouraging people out in the sticks to start their own local pro-industry campaigns.

The response, apparently, has been magnificent. Norman Willis, for the TUC, has written lots of letters to trade unions. The T&G has held an open day. Sheffield's Labour Council has put on an Industry Year event for every day since 1 January. If the reaction of others within the labour movement has been, well, a little tepid, that of people outside it — especially those with business and Establishment links — has been positively enthusiastic.

Dear God/Santa . . .

The CBI has set up a competition for young people to 'tell British industry where to go', *Cosmopolitan* magazine has helped arrange a conference on Women in Industry, the DTI and the Institute of Directors have launched a 'work shadowing' programme for 3,000 sixth formers (padding round after top businessmen on their daily rounds), a British Rail locomotive has been triumphantly named 'Industry Year 1986' and the Queen, accompanied by the Primate, has attended a service of thanksgiving and intercession for British industry at St Paul's Cathedral (the views of the Almighty are not recorded).

The main emphasis has been on schools. Before Industry Year, only 25 per cent of secondary schools had direct links with local firms. Now, 70 per cent have them. So successful, indeed, has the campaign been that it is to carry on. 'What Happens After 1986?' asks the December issue of *Industry Year News*. The Duke of Edinburgh, as President of the RSA, provides the answer: '. . . unless the initiative is maintained after the end of 1986, many of the benefits will be lost and it will fail to take the last bastion of the anti-industry culture'.

Thus we have an endorsement from the highest non-political level of a questionable sociologists' concept, backed up by the appropriately royal metaphor of a castle under siege. The image of a stubbornly resistant but ultimately defeatable culture gives comfort to the pro-industry (for which read pro-entrepreneur) crusaders. But it diverts attention from the real task: dealing with the messy problems industrial collapse has left in its wake.

Let us not knock Industry Year. Better industrial training is certainly needed, and so is a better and earlier knowledge of what industry does and can do. Let us query, instead, the assumption behind it — which lends itself easily to the argument that socialism is not only bankrupt but economically damaging.

MARTIN WIENER, in *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* points an accusing finger at decadent, late Victorian Bloomsbury sensibilities, which have led to a preference for rural arcadia over dark satanic mills:

> The dominant collective self-image in English culture became less and less that of the world's workshop . . . The past, and the countryside — seen as inseparable — were invested with an almost irresistible aura. These standards and images supported a very attractive way of life, geared to maintenance of a *status quo* rather than innovation, comfort rather than attainment, the civilised enjoyment, rather than the creation, of wealth.

In Industry Year, Correlli Barnett's polemic *The Audit of War*, wildly popular in the right-wing review columns, takes the case one step further. Why has Britain's decline gathered pace? Because, says Barnett, Britain's anti-industrial wartime elite, imbued with a 'New Jerusalem' ethic of tender-hearted philanthropy, pandered to a popular desire for state benefits which Britain could not afford.

The remedy, he professes, was in the government's own hands. But instead of providing 'coherent medium- or long-term strategies capable of transforming Britain's obsolete industrial culture, and thereby working a British economic miracle', it offered the welfare state — leading inexorably to the 'dank reality of a segregated, subliterate, unskilled, unhealthy and institutionalised proletariat hanging on the nipple of state maternalism'.

'The remedy for the long-term is, in a word, to change our culture', wrote Henry Phelps-Brown in the 1970s. Sir Geoffrey Chandler cautiously agrees. 'Industry Year cannot reverse the attitude of a century and more in 365 days', he says. 'From now on, every year has got to be Industry Year'.

It is a difficult message to resist. But if we allow ourselves to be swept up into the 'culture' assumption, we may also find ourselves clinging to Barnett's moralising belief that somewhere out there existed or exists an 'economic miracle' if only we had the courage to grasp hold of it.

Alas, the miracle is certainly a myth — and in much of England today, there is nostalgia not for a rural but for a dead industrial past. Whether or not Wiener's thesis can be sustained historically, the watered-down version lends itself paradoxically to hopes that cannot be met. It also encourages Labour leaders to make impossibilist claims and to write, in effect, their own epitaph. □

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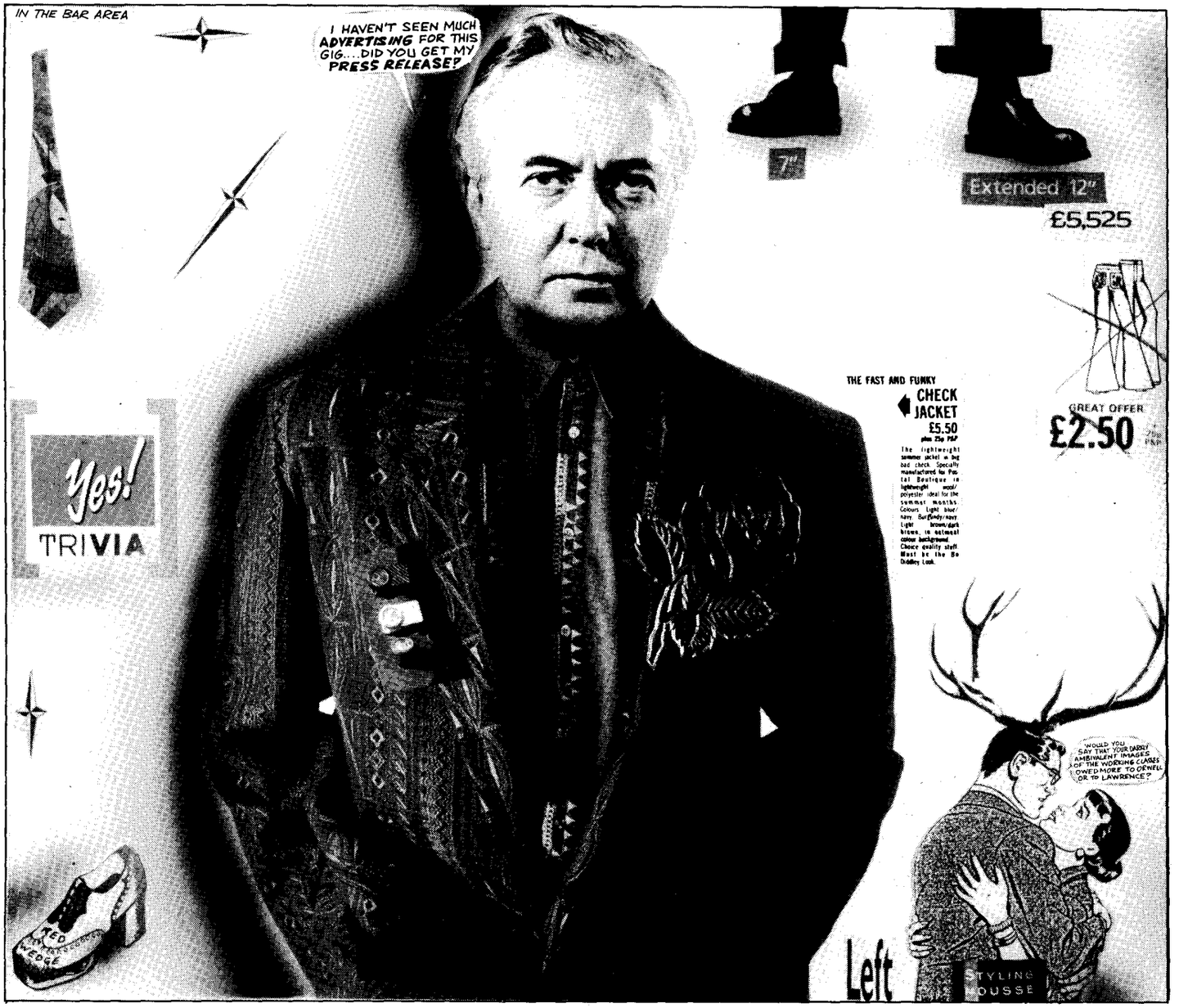

Michael Bennett

STYLE

Design or living?

From pink roses to designer magazines, parts of the metropolitan left are obsessed with what they call 'style' — to the detriment, argues* BOYD TONKIN, *of any real social or cultural innovation

'GOOD THINGS LOOK GOOD.' Who said that? Well, Plato for one.

More recently, Robert Elms, formerly the bulbous feature on *The Face*, tried at this autumn's *Left Unlimited* beanfeast to convince a receptive slice of the British left that beauty is truth, truth beauty.

In the pages of journals such as *Marxism Today* and *New Socialist* a spat between roundheads and cavaliers over the merits of 'designer socialism' has revolved like a stuck record for most of this year. There's scant evidence to suggest that they think of little else in Knowsley North — or anywhere north of Covent Garden. Always less than sparkling, the terms of the quarrel have dwindled ever deeper into tired recrimination. This is a shame, and a waste. A potentially useful outing for political animals in the land of pleasure, entertainment and (dare it be said) art, has sunk into a parochial squabble about marketing and fashion.

A commonplace current among the new, new left (anti-state, self-organising, rainbow coalitionist) has it that traditional socialists always deferred gratification until after the building of Jerusalem. It's hard to know quite

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what Victorian radicals of the stamp of William Morris, the ultimate designer socialist, would have made of this charge. More accurate, perhaps, would be to say that British progressives have seldom grasped how to keep the tricky liaison between politics and cultural expression together.

The biographer Michael Holroyd once unforgettably summed up the pre-war *New Statesman* as a pantomime horse: Fabian at the front, Bloomsbury at the back. That often meant an unsavoury snarl-up somewhere in the middle. Some things never change. And the question of how a social movement can, or should, address needs other than shelter and survival refuses to lie down. It was no wild-eyed theorist but Ernest Bevin, the grand vizier of shiny-suited Labourism, who once lamented that the trouble with his people was 'the poverty of their desire'.

At a time when poverty seems far from metaphorical to many millions in Britain, the left has staged a fresh attempt to reach the parts that public spending and job creation cannot reach. *Left Unlimited* saw the consumer radicals running at full throttle. Born-again *flâneurs* cast aside their heavy thoughts and trod the primrose path from Gramsci to Gucci. Electoral and ideological setbacks have bred a desperate eagerness to please. The paradigm activity of left intellectuals used to be teaching; now it is selling. For better or worse, to have turned a generation of pedagogues into hustlers must count as one of the unsung victories of Thatcherism.

But populism does not always coincide with popularity. However sleek the magazines, the lady's third term looks more than ever probable. In these stony years of hope delayed, identification with a vibrant commercial culture can act as a kind of political porridge: something to send you out glowing into the cold Tory dawn.

So *Left Unlimited*, which gave little space to boring old élitist arts such as live theatre, spent two sessions in rapturous discussion of TV soap operas. Aptly enough, an event that paraded writers, actors and producers from *EastEnders* and *Brookside* took place on a Sunday morning. Its atmosphere resembled a pentecostal service. People testified. They paid homage. They bore witness to the power of a regular, early-evening excursion into the issues of rape or racism. A suffocating cosiness prevailed. And the whole shebang ended with a collective, rather post-coital sigh of disappointment.

All this fawning attention is a bit hard on the programmes themselves. Deftly written, well acted, they do deserve their vast audiences. *EastEnders* in particular, for all its gloss of social concern, uses some shamelessly old-fashioned tricks from music-hall and melodrama to tease its viewers' terrors and desires. But cultural radicals, bereft of their old gods, have forced the soaps — and other trends in dress, design and music — to carry an unfair weight of expectation. When Simone de Beauvoir died the French daily *Libération* devoted a dozen pages to her career. At present it seems as if the chic left press here would care to arrange a similar send-off only if and when Angie pulls her last pint.

What appears to have vanished from the scene almost overnight is that veneration of the avant-garde that enthralled the cultural debates of the Seventies. Even a short while ago the dream of a consummation between Marxism and modernism loomed over the agenda of the aesthetic left like Vladimir Tatlin's unbuilt tower. Like the ideal Party, the path-breaking artist could lead the people forward. As Brecht wrote in a polemic against the crushing orthodoxy of Socialist Realism, 'There is not only such a thing as being popular, there is also the process of becoming popular.'

This shotgun marriage of vanguard art and revolution led often enough to heartbreak and silence (always on the side of the poets). As writers such as Milan Kundera now argue, it may well have been a ghastly mistake. But it really happened. In the 'red corner' of the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris you can see the almost adjacent graves of Communist Party leader Maurice Thorez and Surrealist poet Paul Eluard: pitiless fixer and lyric seer, united in death, as in life.

> ***'The paradigm activity of left intellectuals used to be teaching; now it is selling. For better or worse, to have turned a generation of pedagogues into hustlers must count as one of the unsung victories of Thatcherism.'***

The belief that cultural forms themselves can break through to new modes of thought and perception lives on. It endures in the breathtaking freedom of certain feminist novelists to unravel and re-weave the *genres* of fiction. But a more manipulative politics now looks on art again not as a site of discovery, but as a humble vector for finished statements. From activist to 'difficult' artist, the tacit message seems to be not merely, 'Let's call the whole thing off'; but 'Forget we ever knew each other'.

Two separate issues have tangled in the left's pursuit of a light touch in the cultural marketplace. First comes the political demand to appeal to likely supporters on the evidence of where they are, rather than where a self-proclaimed leadership thinks they should be. Its strength lies in a refusal to distinguish from on high between 'real' and 'articial' needs, and an ability to draw out the utopian passions hidden within everyday leisure and consumption.

But even if the organised left, through outfits such as Red Wedge, keeps its eye trained on the weather in the streets, it still can't hope to please all of the people all of the time. Here the other, and shadier, half of its pact with the demons of style comes into force. This involves, not just the effort to cultivate a sensitivity to popular tastes, but the rasher wish to treat some selected modes and trends as if they held a monopoly of radical virtue.

It's all too easy to overload the frail bark of fashion with political intent. Fashion is fickle. Its fickleness makes it fashion, and makes it fun. In clothes, clubs or culture people play it as a game of chance, ever willing to cut their losses and move on to the next table. A social movement may want to show that it understands, and approves of, the game, but if it stakes too much on one minority trend (and stable majorities don't exist in this field) another turn of the wheel can leave it dressed in some future version of crushed-velvet loons and a shaggy Afghan.

From the French Revolution to the class of '68, the history of revolt and reform is littered with the wreckage of sartorial and decorative adventures that misfired. Through the red cap or the Mao jacket, most aimed at the manifestation of a new 'symbolic order'. At length, this sacramental politics always breaks down. Image and idea part company. We spend our lives among the ghosts of these departed certainties. Even the crumpled, dishwater-coloured business suit — a pet hate of the peacock left — preserves the homage of the European middle class to a Napoleonic creed of male equality before state and law. Yes, style speaks volumes. But, after a time, no one bothers to listen.

In matters of choice and consumption, radicals often tend to imitate the stance of the Catholic Church on sex: everything is forbidden until it becomes compulsory. Cultural pluralism proved a hard lesson for the left to learn. Some of the agencies that best embodied it have gone for good, such as the GLC of the mid-Eighties. Tighter and harsher market conditions threaten it yet again. Behind all the sneers about parkas and flares an insolent dandyism is at large. Its project sometimes seems to be not the liberation of desire, but the rule of the elect. Cultural choices are nothing like Blackpool Rock. They never say the same thing all the way through the phases and occasions of anyone's life. So, for instance, the young or insecure may often choose to follow trends partly to win friends and impress their peers. Some of those clubland heroines and heroes the politicos are so keen to court may harbour a more private passion for Mingus or Mozart, Plath or Pasolini.

In the empire of signs, we all belong to many different tribes. A secular social movement has no right to direct or define these preferences. What it can do is fight for the resources to allow people to get on with their own lives. And, in a climate of conformism, the chance to rebel matters far more than the duty to flow with the tide. To hitch the radical wagon to each passing vogue feels suspiciously like bullying. If you can't do both, it's surely braver to protect the eccentric than flatter the fashionable. The hip and the cool aren't going to wither away for lack of admiration from the left.

Before this latest push to bulldoze progressives into a liking for *Dynasty* and disco, left aesthetics had quite lost its categorical imperative. It no longer dared to say: as we do, so must the world. For a cluster of interests that sought to create a

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politics, not a theology, this dispersal of dogma was a welcome advance. Enriched by the 'new social forces' of the post-Sixties scene and the 20th-century speciality of instant obsolescence, political imagery entered an era of inflationary turnover.

Each choice of style attracts its fans and its foes. But eventually they tend to co-exist and commingle. In this contest there are few outright winners, or losers. Moreover, every new look starts out freighted with ideological value, a cargo that it often sheds as time goes by. Take the tweedy, fibrous simplicity that so gets up the noses of the glitzy populists, provoking those now somewhat stale jokes about donkey jackets and woolly hats at Greenham. The Brylcreem Tendency reads this elective plainness as slumming, 'the mystique of poverty'. But they miss its messianic origins. It is also a form of ascesis, a postponement of desire until after the moment of release from fear or injustice. Radical dowdiness stores up beauty for a future in which, unlike a lot of its enemies, it still wants to believe.

In the field of performance this austerity finds its match in the various guises of what used to be called Socialist Realism, perhaps the most spectacular misnomer since the Holy Roman Empire. Seldom seen now in its vintage, boy-meets-tractor form, the old urge to teach and judge through art still fuels the current hankering to colonise the soaps and mete out tales of virtuous plebs and vile bosses (even if it's only Dirty Den).

Elsewhere on the left, the will to make of creativity a focus for the reconciliation of culture and nature continues to flourish. From the Arts and Crafts movement through rock festivals to the public face of CND, radical imagery has prefigured a society willing to repair the ravages of industrialism. In flat contradiction to this pastoral longing, another strand of iconography, born with Futurism and the Soviet revolution, elevates the city over the field and the lathe over the tree. Many of the left's present wrangles over style and design bear the traces of this rivalry between the images of organism and mechanism.

But the Labour movement has shown that it can exploit both sides of the quarrel without having to bother too much about the roots of the dispute. The party's new thornless rose could have fallen straight out of a Morris chintz. In contrast, the constructivist figures of Red Wedge and recent typographical trends mimic the hard lines of the machine and the factory, their distant sources lying in a crude industrial triumphalism.

Critics of the homespun left's penchant for rustic themes like to mock them as sentimental and backward-looking, out of touch with the modern, urban world. In fact, both country and city stylists are the victims of nostalgia. A taste for 'high tech' imagery often copies the outer shell of declining industrial processes. After all, you can run a software business as easily from a converted Gothic chapel as from an aluminium cube.

From this perspective, the Richard Rogers look can be just as quaint as Laura Ashley ever was. A Marie Antoinette of the Seventies who wanted to play at working in a power station would probably have commissioned something like the Pompidou Centre. On the postmodern carousel of style no single rider can lay claim to the spirit of the age. In time, they'll all come round again. For radicals to wade into this free-for-all and seize one mode rather than another as the elixir of modernity would be an embarrassing folly, an attempt to build on sand.

In bourgeois Europe of the 19th century, fashion arose from the ruins of autocracy. In speech and dress, building and entertainment, it became both cause and effect of that quickening of the cycle of consumption that commodity production brought about. From the Regency beaux onwards, the 'arbiters of taste' spoke in a language of command and prohibition that jokily recalled the deadly serious fiats of the *anciens regimes*. Some of the recent rhetorical swipes from both ends of the 'style wars' debate have seemed in danger of missing what that phrase itself facetiously admits. Arguments about trends and modes work by analogy with political struggles. But they remain metaphors and displacements, not the thing itself.

Advising socialists to smarten up their act, Robert Elms has announced more than once that 'the way things look is the way things are'. If you wanted to strike an adversary pose from the other trench, it would be easy to point out this line's resemblance to a school of High Tory apologetics for the status quo, from Alexander Pope's 'Whatever is, is right' to the trust in the truth of appearances that underpins Roger Scruton's *The Meaning of Conservatism*. But a willingness to discuss style in these terms doesn't turn you into a reactionary ritualist. It merely shows that the language of desire, which fashion talks, is always a language of metaphor, one that politicians will never translate perfectly.

A radical movement may want to understand the grammar of that language, and to help others speak it more freely. It can empower people to make their own aesthetic choices through the provision of equality, education and employment. In a pluralistic culture, there its duties cease. The Labour Party — or any other cause — no more needs a monolithic style of its own than it needs a manifesto commitment on the width of trouser legs.

It hurts to say so after a decade of 'lifestyle' politics on the left, but the will to fuse the realm of taste with the ends of public action is a fit ambition only for an ayatollah. □

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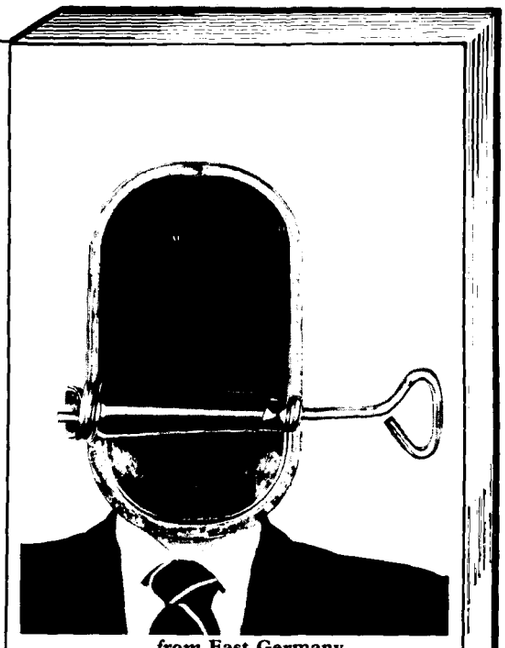

from East Germany
FLIGHT OF ASHES
by Monika Maron

You are an honest journalist—you discover a potential Chernobyl *and*—you write east of the Berlin Wall. Reporter Josefa Nadler is likeable, disorganised, amusingly scathing about herself and her newspaper colleagues. Then a visit to "the filthiest town in Europe" plunges her into the personal and professional battle of her life. In *Flight of Ashes* author Monika Maron breaks with the prescribed silences about the press, the Party, the position of women and the real lives of workers in a Workers' State.

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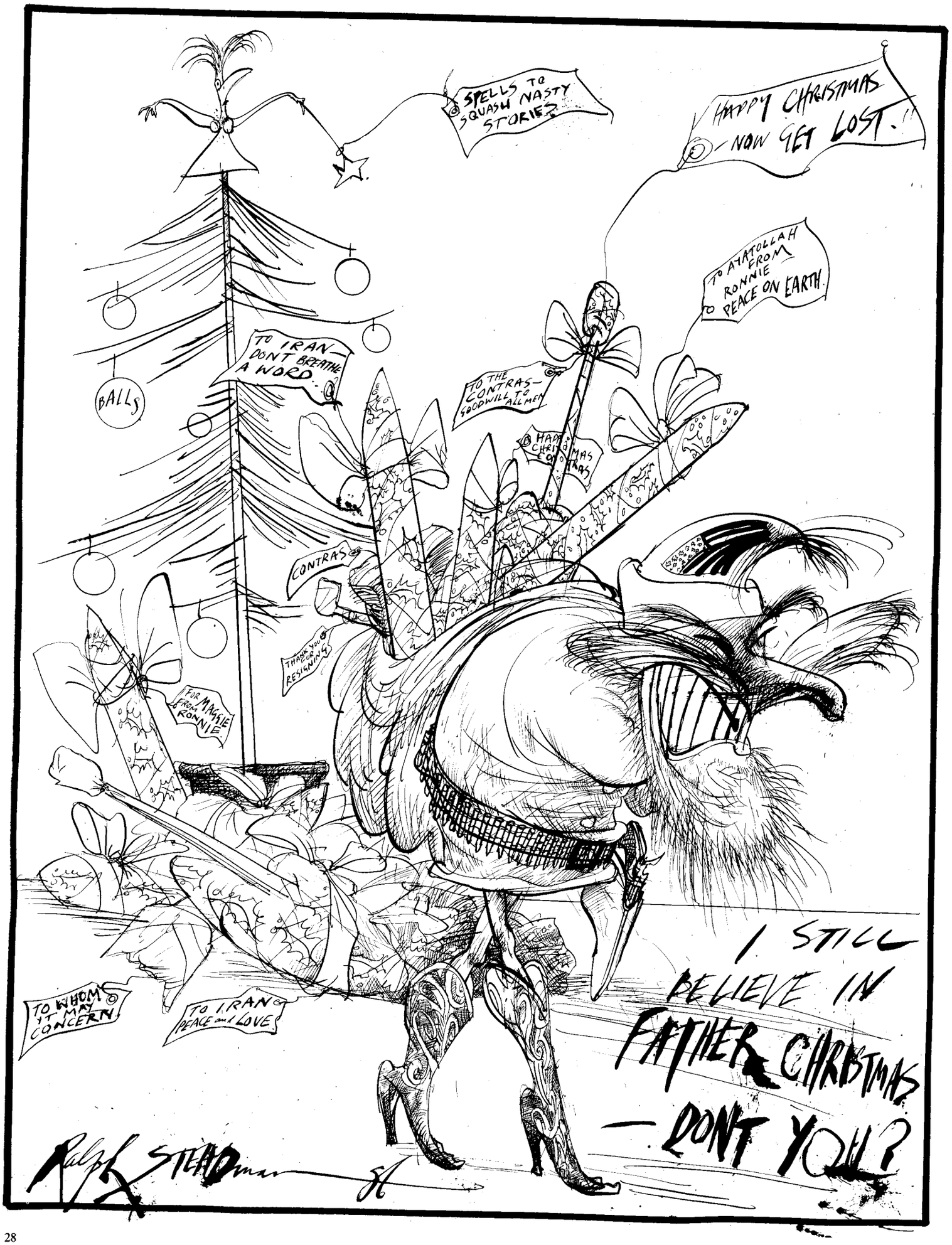
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HAPPY CHRISTMAS — NOW GET LOST.!!
TO AYATOLLAH FROM RONNIE TO PEACE ON EARTH
TO IRAN— DONT BREATHE A WORD.
BALLS
TO THE CONTRAS— GOODWILL TO ALLMEN
CONTRAS
THANK YOU FOR RESIGNING
FOR MAGGIE FROM RONNIE
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN
TO IRAN PEACE and LOVE
I STILL BELIEVE IN FATHER CHRISTMAS — DONT YOU?
Ralph Steadman

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The Reagan

(Acknowledgments to Edgar Allan Poe)

Illustrated by Colin Wheeler

Once when close to midnight deadlines, while I scanned again the headlines
And the screwed-up bits of paper that lay scattered on the floor
Like discarded tufts of flocking, suddenly there came a knocking:
Someone come to fill my stocking? — or perhaps 'twas something more,
Something sinister and shocking that was at my chamber door,
Like a show on Channel 4.

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December,
Bleaker even than November which had chilled me to the core.
Vainly had I tried to follow all the tales that sounded hollow,
But I found them hard to swallow, for I'd heard them oft before
From the Great Communicator whom the media adore,
Though I couldn't see what for.

Open then I flung the portal, when like one who is immortal
In there stepped the Stately Reagan whom I thought was such a bore;
Not the least awareness showed he, not upon a donkey rode he,
But with mien of Big Bill Cody stood beside my chamber door,
Read the script so well provided by his loyal aides, and swore
He was not a man of war.

Then this ancient bird and shameless, keen to show that he was blameless
By the grave and frank expression on his countenance he wore,
Croaked, obedient to his tutor, 'There's a special prosecutor
I've appointed who's a neuter and will every path explore.'
'Will you go like Tricky Dicky,' I enquired, 'did once before?'
Quoth the Reagan, 'Nevermore.'

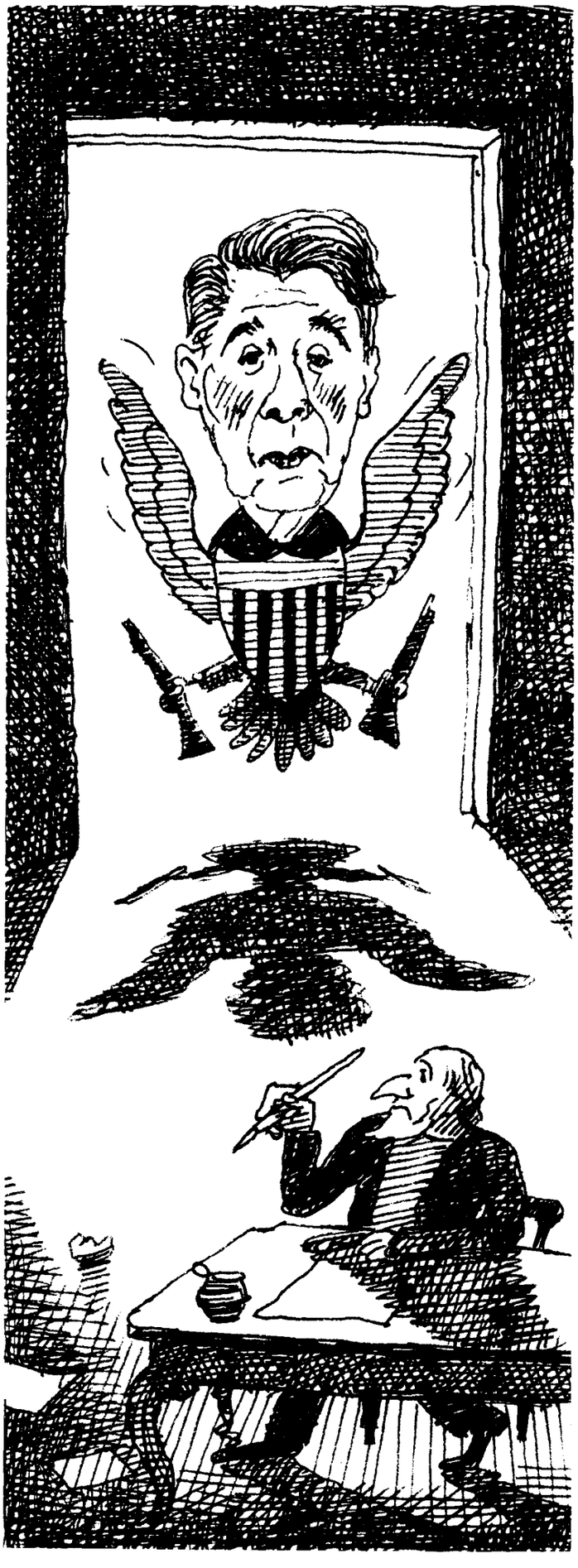
Much I marvelled at such candour, which could not have been much blander,
And the earnest propaganda that was beamed from shore to shore,
Though to feed the fires of terror and deny it was an error
Clearly called for psychotherapy and sackings even more;
So I asked when he'd be willing to let others mind the store,
But the bird said, 'Nevermore.'

And my mind turned, when he'd spoken, to the sacred pledge he'd broken,
His revered inauguration and the solemn oath he swore;
But this venerated master, whom unmerciful disaster
Followed fast and followed faster, till they battered at the door,
Merely shook his moulting feathers, said he found it all a bore
And in sleep began to snore.

So I nudged him into waking, though it took a lot of shaking,
For the mere idea of thinking was to him a tiresome chore;
And this bird of evil-doing, who'd embarrass J.R. Ewing
And no longer had them queueing, as they did in days of yore,
Seemed at last to get the message even he could not ignore,
Though he hardly knew the score.

Then this leader of the nation, who was short of information
(So he claimed) that touched the Contras and the dark Iranian shore,
Said, 'The ride is getting rougher, but I mean to play it tougher,
Though the aides from whom I suffer are darn rotten to the Corps.
It's too bad the files are shredded, which is something I deplore,
And they're headed for the door.'

And the Reagan, ragged eagle, with his talons proved illegal
And on weakly-flapping wings above the wreckage tried to soar;
And the friend-forsaken Nero, once mistaken for a hero,
Knew his stock had slumped to zero and lay worthless on the floor;
And I wondered whether White House-wise his term would last to four.
Quoth the Reagan, 'Nevermore.'



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KENNETH BAKER'S CHRISTMAS QUIZ

Are you sitting comfortably? In a moment the Education Secretary would like to ask you some questions. But first, to jog your jaded memory . . . yes, another whole year has gone by . . .

THE YEAR began as it meant to go on: badly. There was extract of salmonella in the Farley's baby food, the excrement was hitting the rotor-blades in the Westland affair and a newpaper proprietor — Maxwell, oddly enough, because Murdoch was lying, and we do mean lying, low then — threatened to close down all his papers unless the unions belted up. And it began particularly badly for pop singer Ricky Nelson, who became, as 1986 crept across the threshold, the late Ricky Nelson.

It all seems long ago now, like scenes from *The Monocled Mutineer*. The big BBC row at the time was not over *Panorama*'s Hitler salutes but *Rough Justice*: a couple of sacked journalists thought they'd received just that. And the big leak then was not of MI5 skullduggery but of a letter from Patrick Mayhew about the helicopter fiasco. It seems hard to credit it now, but just after 11 on a January morning, Michael Heseltine strode out of the Cabinet room and out of the government.

There was more to come and it came very soon. Leon Brittan was in trouble for, among other things, leaning on Sir Raymond Lygo, head of British Aerospace, and he — the Trade Minister, that is — came and went. But not before another bit part player in this simply divine comedy, Alan Bristow of yet another helicopter company, had been offered a back-of-a-lorry knighthood to keep his trap shut.

No wonder that polls showed the Tories below the Alliance, neck and neck with the Monster Raving Loony Party but above poor old Commander Bill Boaks, the champion of lost causes and lost deposits. The humiliation was too much for the perennial by-election candidate and he later joined the great constituency in the sky.

When Andrew Lloyd Webber's Really Useful Company went public, it made him £10 million, that is, a substantial fraction of the total Westland value. No one made a fortune from the really useless movie *Revolution*; the only revolution it caused was among the backers' bankers.

February began well, with Sir Keith Joseph declaring that he would not stand again for parliament. It ended well for Lord Hailsham, who was discovered preparing his trousseau for his third wedding. In between, fate smiled on Lindy Chamberlain, released from an Australian slammer where she had done three years over the Dingo Murder case; but as the T-shirt had it, 'The Dingo is Innocent OK'.

Talking of murderers, Duvalier announced that he would not stand as dictator of Haiti again; and the Philippine electorate showed that if Marcos dared to ask for reselection, he would lose more than his deposit.

Early in March, the teachers' dispute achieved only a 'partial' peace, and they could say that again. The Sizewell report was 'delayed'; they could say that again too. Gadafy set up his 'line of death' but the only death, apart from Sir Huw Weldon's, was that of the GLC, on the stroke of midnight heralding April the first.

Several fools were parted from their money, thanks to a Satanist and swindler who received £200,000 to rid himself of evil. Yet there was a lot of evil around, some of it drifting over from Chernobyl (it couldn't happen here but we wish they'd hurry up with the Sizewell report) and some of it flying from Britain in F111s down to Libya (to teach Gadafy's baby daughter a lesson about terrorism she would never forget to her dying day — 16 April, in fact).

THE BAD NEWS in May was Princess Di Feels A Bit Faint Shock Horror. Fortunately this happened in Vancouver, where it was safe to splash the royal brow with water; in this country, she would have gone down instantly from radiation sickness.

In South Africa the chief hazard encountered by the ruling Nationalist Party turned out to be a violent clan lower down the evolutionary scale not yet ready for civilised control of their own destiny, that is, the white neo-Nazis. Meanwhile in Austria, Kurt Waldheim, in his presidential campaign, was faced with charges of jack-booted war crimes; what the result says about the electorate doesn't bear thinking about — he romped home.

A bundle of top secret Navy papers, which showed that the Senior Service was holed below the waterline by a massive overdraft, were lost. Fortunately the AWOL documents were returned before Lord 'Big Chief I-Spy' Rothschild could fly Chapman Pincher over to write a book about them.

The *Mail on Sunday* wrote an article about Victoria Gillick's daughter going topless and everyone produced pieces on Olivia Channon, who finished her Finals and her life at the same time. Sixty-three per cent of the Irish were against divorce, as is 100 per cent of Cecil Parkinson, whose ex-girlfriend Sara Keays managed to get herself back into the news, generally when someone like Rhodes Boyson was fulminating against the 'evil' of single-parent families.

Which brings us reluctantly to two-parent families. With the nuptials of Charles ('I talk to the trees') and Di ('By the time he counts to ten I shall have gone into a deep sleep and lost five pounds') not long behind us, how could the nation bear to be glued to the television set again for That Wedding? An action replay of all the sentimental pomp and irritating circumstance? Still, at least she turned him down; *EastEnders* isn't all bad. As for Randy and Fergie, let's hope they get their Aids leaflet like everyone else.

The autumn's most touching ceremony was the Swapping of the (Alleged) Spies, when Daniloff of *US News & World Report* was exchanged for a token Russian agent — without, you note, any suspicion of selling arms to one lot of lunatics and sending the cash to another lot of lunatics. Who says Reagan is all bad? We do, actually, for making sure that Reykjavik was totally unprodutive, thus exposing us all to the risk of exchanging winter for Nuclear Winter. When we refer to Big Bang, we don't mean that Stock Exchange reorganisation designed to ensure that hordes of 26-year-olds can pull down sums in excess of £100,000 a year.

How many teachers' salaries does that represent? Write on both sides of the paper (there's a shortage) and show your calculations, preferably to Kenneth Baker. □

Now, is the full horror of the Last Year of Thatcherism beginning to flood back? Answers to quiz questions opposite are on p.71.

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DID YOU sleep through 1986? An understandable reaction, no doubt, but one which you will regret when coming to do this end-of-term quiz. If you stayed awake, see how much attention you were paying by checking your score against this continuous assessment grading:
55-72: Congratulations! You are worthy of one of the 20 Kenneth Baker city science schools.
37-54: Certainly grammar school material.
19-36: Not enough of the Three Rs — we blame your lefty teachers.
0-18: You must come from a single-parent family — your only hope is a private school run by Rhodes Boyson.

Loss Leaders

1. Whose trip to the cinema turned into a horror movie?
2. Which eminent Conservative suffered from whacking great Phibbs?
3. Who poo-pooed the 'hysterical outcry of certain Western countries'?
4. With the sort of friends who announced your deposition before it happened, you didn't need enemies — who are you and who are your friends?
5. Who contracted Dupuytren's Contracture?
6. Who wished she had been the same shoe size as her predecessor's wife?
7. Why did hunger make the Reagans hold hands?

Improper relations

1. Where do Adrian Mole and Pandora Braithwaite finally consummate their relationship?
2. Who forbade the schoolchildren to learn of Jenny's living arrangements?

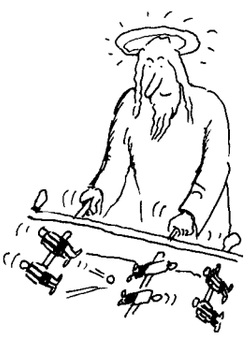
3. Who wasn't giving Max Hastings satisfaction?
4. Who claimed she was going broke maintaining an MP?
5. Who said: 'The bitch. If I get my hands round the woman they will have me for homicide. Shit'?

Science & Industry

1. Did Sugar Take Him?
2. What ran out of tin?
3. Which part of the Guinness empire did the insider traders decide was good for them?
4. What happened to the foolish virgin in deep water who wouldn't go all the way?
5. Who has been splashing out record sums at Woolies?

Competitive (as officially approved of by ILEA) Sports

1. Who paid £2,150 for the privilege of telling Jeremy Shales he would never work with him again?
2. Who sacked his manager for saying he did, but later admitted he had — with a vicar in the vestry of his church?
3. Where was Chicago when the Reykjavik summit collapsed?



4. When did the Deity commit a foul in the penalty area and get away with it?
5. Who got into trouble for wiping some stout off his chest?

With Nobs on

1. What sank Bismarck?
2. Where did Geldof pick up 'nice vibes'?
3. Which Westminster high-up lost the battle at the European Court of Human Rights over leasehold reform laws?
4. Which Lord renounced his peerage after 43 years?
5. Whose coffin was not by royal appointment?

New(s)papers

1. Which Wapping-based newspaper never went to Wapping and never came out?
2. Why did people in Manchester, Sheffield and Merseyside have to wait until tomorrow?
3. Who said, of what, 'it can't work'?
4. Who promised to 'remain independent of all political parties and institutions', in the second of 12 commandments?
5. Who said: 'I think it's wrong to accept an honour from any party if you're in a position to influence day-to-day events. You must stay independent'?

Complete Disasters

1. Which government institutions have been having trouble with their roofs?
2. Why was the Maze the least inflammatory part to be in?
3. Whose class was cancelled in the Florida stratosphere?
4. In what latterday Dunkirk did Britannia rule the waves?
5. Whose fiancee was carrying excess baggage?
6. What made Stoney Cross?

King William College Memorial Section

(cribbed from the *Guardian*, an exclusive preview)
1. Account for: (a) £2,000 (b) $10-30 million (c) £1,004,000 (d) $225 billion (e) 30 pieces of silver
2. Repudiate: (a) Elevation (b) Fornication (c) Salutation (d)

Inebriation (e) Hallucination

Arts and Crafts

1. Who forgot his lines about a little house in Chelsea?
2. Which dole scrounger now works weekends only?
3. Who recommended not looking after Number One or Number Two?
4. Who is giving us all a facelift?
5. With whom did Harold Kurtz discover he had written a book?

Sound and Fury

1. Who has a chip on her shoulder about plates North of Watford?
2. What organisation didn't bring much hope to LAND?
3. Who doesn't invest in 'laser-beam miracles'?
4. Whose negative approach caused riots and nails sealing off the M1?

The *New Statesman*'s Year

1. Why was last year's Christmas issue of the *New Statesman* removed from newsagents in David Owen's constituency?
2. Who argued that the 'fairly lavish' profits made by tampon makers were in women's own interest?
3. Who made a TV commercial in Tanzania featuring a lightning bird?
4. Who bought a copy of John Le Carre's *A Perfect Spy* from Bowes and Bowes, Cambridge?
5. Who revealed that he had a duck called Spats?
6. Who complained of 'rumours and the gossip of the BBC'?
7. Who said: (a) 'I have always believed, for a very long time . . .'? (b) 'I wouldn't set off with one ingredient, and say that's the rock round which everything else should rotate . . .'? (c) 'Anyone who puts a foot out of line gets it chopped off'? (d) 'So you do have to be precise. And if the standard is generally good, as it is — though there's a tendency to muddle news with comment, and a tendency to sensationalise . . . er, I have lost track of what your question was'?

In the *New Statesman* 50 years ago

1. Who wrote, in a piece entitled 'Pacifism is Enough', that 'the existence of a warlike temper in Germany is not so much a difficulty for the pacifist to encounter as a vindication of his whole position'?
2. Who, in the 1936 equivalent of Knowsley North, 'after an unpleasant amount of boggling, [was] finally accepted by the official Conservatives for the Scottish Universities' seat which he did his best to abolish not so long ago'?
3. About what did 'Critic' write in A London Diary: 'Everyone is unhappy; some are angry, some shake their heads and say "poor boy"; a few are his eager champions. Conservatives are nearly always the fiercest'?
4. Who protested that a reviewer of his book had implied he was 'mean, shifty and cowardly' and suggested that his assailant, 'who does not know me, is allowing political excitement to move him beyond the decencies of literary criticism', thus proving that even then authors wrote in to complain about their reviews?
5. Whose new book 'is difficult technical stuff for the professional economist, but begins with a chapter (only half a page long) which I understand perfectly: it says that classical economics from Ricardo onwards have always been based on false premises; that the postulates which they made universal were really deduced from the special circumstances of a particular period'?

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On Christmas morning the household is usually woken early by the merry sound of Cecil opening the legs of his present . . .

. . . while Paul always looks forward to a novelty. Last year, it was a public sighting of Norman Willis.

While I am trying to find where the kitchen is for my camera crew, Denis generally goes 'a-wassailing', which I assume is some form of sporting activity . . .

After lunch Norman and Douglas make a special point of monitoring the Queen's speech for communist propaganda, security leaks or pornographic filth . . .

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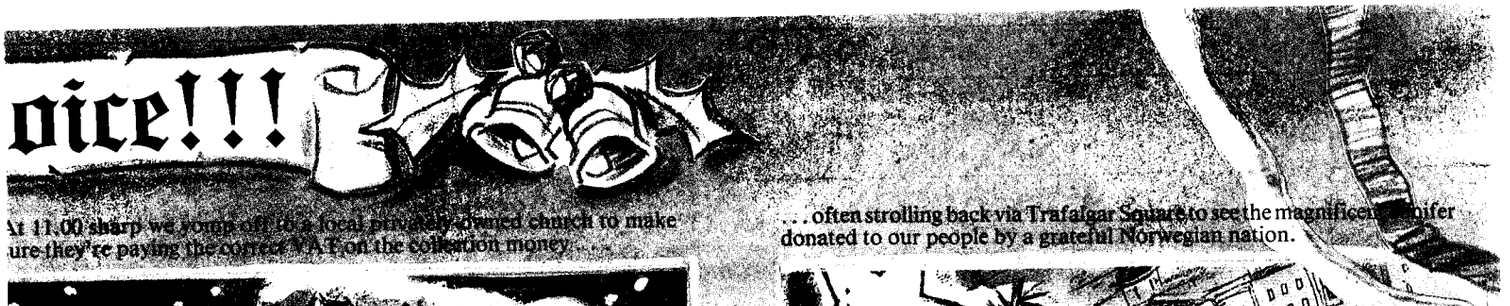
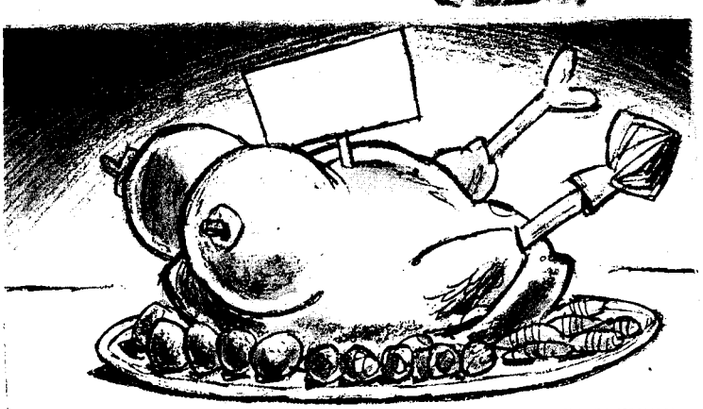


At 11.00 sharp we jump off to a local privately-owned church to make sure they're paying the correct V.A.T. on the collection money.

. . . often strolling back via Trafalgar Square to see the magnificent conifer donated to our people by a grateful Norwegian nation.

Before luncheon, our lovely £450,000 'home-style' dwelling is filled with staff and colleagues, eager to kiss beneath the mistletoe.



. . . then it's only six hours of Paul Daniels until dinner, which, of course is the traditional gorgeous, pouting EEC turkey with oestrogen gravy and roasted E-numbers.

And so to bed, lulled by the shrieks of the young people outside, huddling round a blazing police-car for warmth.

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THE PRESS

How will they vote in '87?

Not as solidly for Mrs T as in '83. Two new papers have come out for the Alliance; the* Guardian *and the* Observer *might even spring for Labour* JOHN RENTOUL *and* JOLYON JENKINS *guesstimate

LONG before Norman Tebbit launched his F-111s to strike the BBC's Libya reporting, he set out the doctrine behind the attack. In an address to broadcasters in June he said that Tory Central Office receives far fewer complaints about newspapers than about television and radio. Therefore the papers aren't biased, he concluded; they don't 'tend to confuse fact and fiction'.

The Tebbit Doctrine should perhaps be extended. On another occasion he remarked that the results of local council elections were 'distorted' by the participation of people who don't pay rates. It cannot have escaped Tebbit's notice that a large number of biased people also take part in general elections. There's a similar problem with juries, as the *Sun* pointed out when it lambasted the '12 muddleheads and dimwits' who took 24 hours to decide that Nezar Hindawi was guilty of trying to blow up a Jumbo jet.

Central Office has never, as far as we know, received a complaint about the *Sun*, which (it follows) is a very unbiased paper. We ought to take seriously, then, the *Sun*'s conclusion: 'Maybe the time has come to replace the whole creaking system with professional jurors.' The logic is irresistible. If we need professional jurors, do we not need professional electors? And if we need professional electors, who better than the objective and factual persons of the 4th Estate?

The Tebbit Doctrine really requires that the outcome of the next election should be decided by an assembly of national newspapers, called a Press Conference, each entitled to a block vote based on their daily or weekly circulation. The *New Statesman* computer prediction is already available: the Conservatives will win by 17,247,000 votes to 12,896,000, which represents a 4 per cent swing away from the Tories since 1983. Applying a Kellner adjustment and translating votes into seats would give Thatcher an increased majority of 362. This, as Norman Tebbit would testify, is a very fair result — except in Scotland, where people would still be electing Labour MPs, and which really ought to be abolished.

Each paper shall be entitled to send a delegation to the Press Conference, made up of delegates or 'leader-writers'. In some cases delegations will have decided — or have been instructed by those to whom they are accountable — how to vote years before they meet. But others will be riven by argument and debate right up to the last minute. The *Independent* and *Guardian* delegations, for instance, could well end up arguing publicly among themselves on the conference floor.

This is our guide to those crucial delegations.

The Guardian

Circulation 523,000 (+ 25%)
Vote last time: Not a Con. landslide

The big question at Farringdon Road is whether the *Guardian* can bring itself to support Labour again. In 1979 it did, but in 1983 it was classified by Butler and Kavanagh (*The British General Election of 1983*) as rooting for 'Not a Con. landslide'. Close textual analysis of the *Guardian* leader column of 8 June 1983 shows this to be the only discernible point in five columns of tortuous waffle: 'the Alliance is the hope that remains of denying Mrs Thatcher her landslide'.

Since then, according to a source close to Farringdon Road speaking on Lobby terms, the *Guardian* has tried to bury the 'smear' that it is an SDP paper. It has settled into an anti-Tory position, and is likely to advocate the best use of readers' votes to get rid of Mrs Thatcher. What will cause internal 'difficulties' will be if the Alliance fails to recover from its dismal opinion poll rating, when 'vote against the Tories' becomes, effectively, 'vote Labour' in a mass of seats where Labour came a close third last time.

A preview of this dilemma was offered by last week's leading article on Labour's defence campaign launch (11 December). For the first time, the *Guardian* said it would welcome a Labour Britain banning our own bomb, explicitly including the scrapping of Polaris missiles. Over this summer, the paper had come out in favour of David Owen and against David Steel in wanting to keep and replace Polaris as Britain's own nuclear weapon.

This point was 'fought over quite hard all day', and brings the paper within fudge distance of Labour Party policy. *Guardian* columnist Hugo Young also moved another tentative and cynical step towards Labour's defence policy, which, he said, 'cannot be disposed of for the whole of the next 12 months by slogans and smears'.

The Independent

Circulation 300,000+
Launched October 1986

Of most interest to the *Guardian* is which way the three-month-old *Independent* will go, it — the *Guardian* — having a vested interest in its coming out for the Tories. Chief leader-writer and ex-SDP candidate John Torode says 'I honestly don't know'. Deputy editor Matthew Symonds, who voted for the Alliance in 1983, is more forthcoming. 'As long as the Labour party is committed to existing defence policies,' he says, 'we will be unable to advocate an outright Labour victory. It's quite conceivable that we will advocate a hung parliament. On economics we tend to the radical right — for example, we're critical of the way the privatisation programme has been carried out. On social issues — prisons, housing, education — we tend to the SDP/Labour view.' Editor Andreas Whittam Smith has pledged that a line *will* be taken just before the election, and it seems more likely to the Alliance than Tory.

Mail on Sunday

Circulation 1,591,000 (+ 38%)
Vote last time: Con.

Conservative Central Office was hugely miffed earlier this year when *MoS* came out for the Liberal/SDP Alliance, in its bid to corner the Sunday Yuppie market. Despite a continuing

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stream of stories like October's Brent 'thought police in schools', editor Stewart Steven has been heard to say 'with every day that goes by I drift further to the left'.

Today

Circulation 337,000 claimed
Launched March 1986
Next out of the closet as an openly Alliance paper was *Today*, on 3 November, with its 'Under Labour we zig, under the Tories we zag' editorial. Editor Brian MacArthur, although he 'would hate to get drawn into detail', is in favour of tactical voting and a hung parliament. And as for *Sunday Today*, 'we will speak with one voice'. He confided: 'I've got an idea which I think has never been tried before.' It turned out to be his resignation, this week. It's been tried before, Brian.

Daily Mail

Circulation 1,777,000 (– 3%)
Vote last time: Con.
Despite a couple of 'One Nation' editorials criticising Mrs Thatcher during the miners strike, the *Mail* remains, between the *Sun* and the *Times*, the pivot of print loyalism to her every word, deed and political campaign. Leader-writer Chris Nicholson — not a member, but last didn't vote Tory in 1966, when he voted Liberal — is proud that the *Mail* was the first paper to back Mrs Thatcher in the Tory leadership election in 1975. He is diplomatic about his sibling-paper's heinous betrayal. 'The *Mail on Sunday* is completely editorially separate. I think it's a very good newspaper. How's that?' But he thinks the Alliance does very well out of the press. 'They argue that they're not well represented on television. But in the press I think they do very well, don't you?' He believes — or hopes — that the main issues in the election will be 'defence, the economy and the appalling left-wing gremlins (from my point of view) in the town halls'.

Daily Star

Circulation 1,331,000 (+ 1%)
Vote last time: Con.
Michael Foot was probably past caring by then, but one of the final disappointments in the last election campaign was when the *Star* came out two days before polling day to say: 'Don't vote for Michael Foot's Labour Party.' Editor Lloyd Turner's political analysis is refreshingly concise: 'The government has made a mess of education and the rates. We support Mrs Thatcher on defence. The Alliance think they've got it sorted out over defence but we don't think they have.' He likes to think the *Star* was the first purveyor of that now 'fashionable' quality, independence. 'It says it is. But we were, many years before.' Turner says he is 'opposed to tactical voting — you ought to decide one way or the other'; and the *Star* will come down in favour of one party next year too.

Daily Express

Circulation 1,774,000 (– 9%)
Vote last time: Con.
The other elephant seal of the mid-brow circulation war — overtaken by the *Mail* for the first time in the September 1986 ABC figures, because it's declining faster. We have been unable to find out who the editor is.

Daily Mirror

Circulation 3,114,000 (– 5%)
Vote last time: Lab.
Robert Maxwell may not be socialist, but his commitment to the Labour Party is perversely unshakeable. Well, the *Mirror* is better than the *Sun*. Isn't it? It did launch a 'Meanie Right' councils campaign last week, to counter 'Loony Left' propaganda.

The Sun

Circulation 4,035,000 (– 3%)
Vote last time: Con.
When doorstepped by the *Tatler* and asked if he believed in God, editor Kevin MacKenzie said: 'I don't want to talk to you.' Nevertheless, he will probably bring himself to back the God-fearing Tory party in 1987.

The Times

Circulation 478,000 (+ 49%)
Vote last time: Con.
Despite the change of address — 1 Pennington Street doesn't have the same ring to it — we're told that the letters column is still a vital barometer of right-wing — unbiased in Tebbitspeak — opinion.

Sunday Times

Circulation 1,127,000 (– 13%)
Vote last time: Con.
Has become virulently Thatcherist since the appointment of Andrew Neil as editor in October 1983, and is now in line with the other Murdoch titles.

Financial Times

Circulation 253,000 (+ 57%)
Vote last time: Con.
A senior *FT* source says it's quite likely that 'where the Alliance is in second place we shall be rooting for them'. The Conservative vote in 1983 was an extremely reluctant one as the editor, Geoffrey Owen, is no friend of Mrs Thatcher. *FT* editorials have been at least as much Alliance as Conservative, and have even been 'understanding' if not supportive of Roy Hattersley. Main political columnist Malcolm Rutherford tends to be dismissive of the Labour Part from a Tory humanist perspective. But it's slightly beneath the dignity of the pinko's pinstriped readers to be told how to vote.

News of the World

Circulation 4,882,000 (+ 19%)
Vote last time: Con.
None of its readers know what its politics are.

Sunday Express

Circulation 2,236,000 (– 21%)
Vote last time: Con.
Too boring to influence anybody.

Sunday Mirror

Circulation 3,013,000 (– 16%)
Vote last time: Lab.
Support for Labour more nominal than the daily version, especially since the recent drafting of right-wing columnist George Gale (editor of the *Spectator* 1970-73) from the *Express*.

Sunday People

Circulation 2,990,000 (– 13%)
Vote last time: Not Con.
Support for Labour yet more nominal still than the other Maxwell titles.

Observer

Circulation 766,000 (– 3%)
Vote last time: Not Con. landslide
According to deputy editor Anthony Howard, it is 'fairly deducible that we shall not be calling for the re-election of Mrs Thatcher'. What's more, 'I should have thought there would be kind words about the Alliance'. What about the Labour Party? 'Well . . .' said Howard, after a long pause, before going on to say that the paper had never explicitly supported the SDP or the Alliance. If he has anything to do with it, it isn't likely to. Political editor Adam Raphael, who is sympathetic to the SDP, is leaving to present BBC2's *Newsnight*, to be successful by Kinnock biographer Robert Harris.

Daily Telegraph

Circulation 1,136,000 (– 13%)
Vote last time: Con.
Max 'First Man Into Port Stanley' Hastings, the new editor, woke up a few Colonel Blimps by coming out in favour of sanctions against South Africa in June: on the pragmatic grounds that Britain should keep in with the future black government. Peregrine Worsthorne, the new editor at the Sunday end of the business, replied with an editorial saying if there were going to be a revolution in South Africa, the whites would win it. Hastings responded with a Garland cartoon of Botha laying out a carpet soaked with blood for Sir Geoffrey Howe's visit.

Sunday Telegraph

Circulation 676,000 (– 13%)
Vote last time: Con.
Editor Peregrine Worsthorne says: 'When I was browned orf with Mrs Thatcher, at the time of the Westland business, I rather argued at the time in favour of coalition government with the Alliance. I approve of David Owen. But tactical voting is always a snare and a delusion — you think you're being clever and you end up with something other than you intended. However awful they are, a bad Tory is better than an SDP candidate.' He is now 'pretty well' a 100 per cent Thatcher supporter, 'and becoming more so all the time — I don't think journalists have to be consistent'.

Which leaves out the mass of unbiased and objective local papers, but let's simply accept the verdict of the Royal Commission on the Press, which said in 1977: 'The evidence we have does not suggest that in either the national or the regional press at present the balance against Labour is a strong one.' Which only makes you wonder what evidence they had. Anyway, since then there have been changes. The level of bias is increasing. Next year, and in time for the election, the *News on Sunday* and the *London Daily News* will be launched. Central Office has already registered 6,435 complaints about both of them, or so we are reliably informed by the independent (as in 'unbiased') Media Monitoring Unit. □

Circulation figures are ABC Apr-Sep 1986, and the figure in brackets is the percentage change since 1983.

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The year Reagan found his 'place in history'

Lying and joking, President Reagan was still the spellbinder — to fellow-Americans — until, as* CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS *describes, 'the six year illusion was over'

Washington

IT WAS THE unkindest pre-Christmas cut that the President could probably have imagined, and perhaps for that reason a compassionate press gave it the least possible prominence. But there it was all the same if you looked hard enough and had heard the tip-off. 'Reagan's way', a special television tribute to the chief executive on his forthcoming seventy-sixth birthday, had been cancelled. The spectacular was to have been aired in February but, said the network executives, the advertisers had been pulling out.

If anybody had told Ronald Reagan last Christmas that he would have been deserted by his two most natural constituencies — television executives and ad-men — he would have donned that maddening aw-shucks grin of his. If he had been any other kind of President, he might not have minded so much anyway. But Reagan has staked everything on the soft-sell, the beautiful timing and the idealised fit between himself and certain cherished images of the American past. It remains just possible that he will wriggle free of the sordid thicket of lies, secrecy and blood money that now enmeshes him. But one wonders if, for this President, the effort will have been worth it. Never again will he be able to discuss vital foreign policies in terms of half-remembered anecdotes. Never again will a cheap quip get him out of a tight corner. Never again will he be able to watch those 'morning in America' replays which swept the country: at least, never again without wincing. For once it's apposite to quote the lost leader:

> Let him never come back to us
> There would be doubt, hesitation and pain
> False praise on our part, the glimmer of twilight
> — Never glad confident morning again.

These lines are usually quoted by people with their tongues in their cheeks, and I have no intention of being the first exception to the rule. The proper response to Reagan's discomfiture and humiliation is to say that it serves him right, and that it was high time the United States got over the awful, narcissistic, self-congratulatory spree into which he had plunged it. Those who live by images and presentation — most especially those who live by deceiving others with image and presentation — should find the appropriate nemesis for their hubris.

IT IS BEGINNING to dawn on the major media, and on Congress, that almost every 'perception' (their favourite word, not mine) about Reagan was false and hollow. In most important cases, the President was doing the precise opposite of what he had gulled people into believing. Take, first, the case of 'big government'.

The 'para-state'

Like all conservative demagogues, Reagan inveighed against the state machinery and the bureaucracy. But unlike some of them, he continued to do this even when he and his team had taken over all the key positions in Washington. To listen to Reagan during the 1984 election was to get the rough impression that Walter Mondale was the profligate, big-spending President while Reagan was the candidate of the little man and the outsider. What's more, it worked. Even at the time, there were a few mutters about the behemoth of the national deficit, raised by Reagan to the first trillion point since records were kept. But now we can see what he meant by 'limited government'. What he meant was invisible government — a para-state within the state, containing its own executives, its own budget, its own airline (operating main routes from Iran to the Honduran border) and its own foreign policy. The only thing that this invisible government has in common with the idea of limited government or the practice of real government is this — for the time being, it has the same president.

Then there was the matter of American 'will'. A great many people, often for quite defensible reasons, had become fed up with the sickly, whining figure of Jimmy Carter. Not everything about American brashness is objectionable or sectarian — it has a wide streak of generosity and optimism to it. Reagan leant on this nerve with all his strength. In a series of masterly scripts, he stiffened the sinews and summoned up the blood; much posturing nonsense was talked, to be sure, but few people were completely immune to the 'can-do' appeal.

Now behold the two symbolic figures of this great 'renewal'. First, Ivan Boesky, the flesh and blood image of a Wall Street yuppie paradise, in which money grew on trees and where nobody seemed to lose. For years the darling of the glossy mag and the innumerable greedy tip-sheets, he is now reduced to a squalid plea-bargain with the Securities and Exchange Commission while all his erstwhile friends erase his name from their address books. How perfectly appropriate it seems, this month, that Donald Regan was imported as a crisis manager from Wall Street, and that Larry Speakes is leaving the PR job at the White House to go and work as PR man for Donald Regan's old brokerage firm.

THE SECOND symbolic figure, of course, is that of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North. Clean-cut until you look too closely at him, and with a chest covered in ribbons, he was a sort of Rambo with a knife and fork. Careless of frontiers, heedless of danger, contemptuous of the law, he embodied the penis-envy of the American right. It is as clear as can be that he is the son Reagan wishes he had had (as opposed to the slightly dim balletomane son that he actually has got). Yet North, unleashed, has made the whole dashing enterprise of Reagan's Custerish foreign policy look tawdry and vicious. With at least Reagan's indulgence, and I should say more probably with his direct encouragement, he has dealt in hostages, slush funds, assassins and narcotics. Now he comes before Congress, to fulfil Reagan's promise of 'full co-operation' with the inquiry, and takes the

AT CHRISTMAS TIME WE ALL CELEBRATE THE GLORIOUS BIRTH OF JESUS!
JESUS DIDN'T BELIEVE IN BANKS OR GREEDY BUSINESS MEN OR PRIVATE PROPERTY OR MAN EXPLOITING MAN OR...OR..
IT'S A GOOD THING HE'S DEAD ISN'T IT?!..
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AP

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At Reykjavic in October (L), the last *more-or-less convincing moment* for the American electorate. After that, *clockwise*: Oliver 'I swear not to incriminate myself' North; the face of Iran; a Swiss laundry; and full confession: 'One of us is a turkey'

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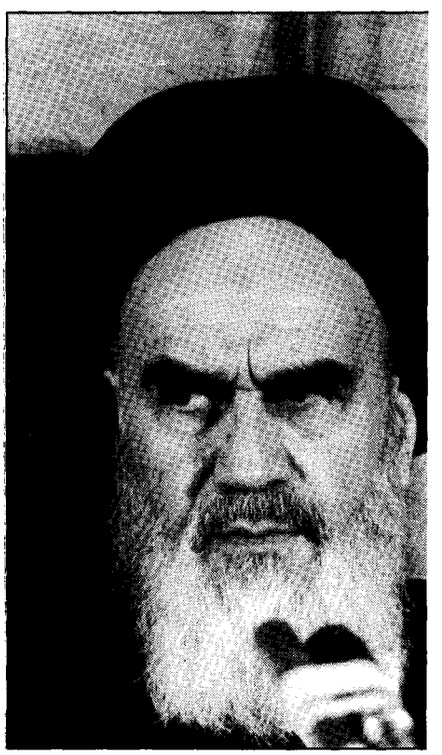
Rex Features



Camera Press

Fifth Amendment. I'm all for the Fifth Amendment myself, but it remains a fact that the American public associates it with smarmy lawyers, the mafia and the teamster's union. In the '50s, the American right waged a campaign against it because it was used as a defence tactic by the victims of the McCarthy purge. For their uniformed 'heroes' to be sheltering behind it now is quite a comedown.

Ronald Reagan began the year as a man wrapped in a cloak of invulnerability. All he had to do, to secure his much-talked about 'place in history', was to leave the deficit to the next administration and make some sort of deal with the Soviet Union. He moved the deficit up a few notches, threw away the chance of a deal for the illusion of Star Wars, and went on lying and joking about both issues. At some point, he over-tested the tolerance of the country. Much could have been forgiven the President who campaigned with such verve against the symbolic foes of the terrorist and drug-dealer. But now he has been found in bed with Iranian fanatics and using the revenues of the prostitution to finance the drug-dealing and murderous Contras. One or the other, Ronnie, but not both. Even if his Presidency is not over, his six-year reign of illusion undoubtedly is. □

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At stake: the survival of the planet

Though he has now been retired from the Congress for several years, Democratic Party elder statesman George McGovern stood out almost alone during the recent mid-term elections against excessive Democratic compromise with Reaganite populism. The lesson American liberals should draw from Reagan's career, the senator reiterated in TV broadcasts and articles, was to stick to its principles even at the price of years on the political margins. Then came 'Irangate'. Suddenly it wasn't a question of years on the margin, but a Democrat-controlled Senate and a President in flight from the extreme right-wingers in his own basement. Writing specially for the New Statesman,* SENATOR McGOVERN *expects 'a blessed byproduct of the President's current predicament: a healthier balance between executive and legislative power'

Washington

AMERICAN political and foreign policy revelations have come with such dizzying speed in recent weeks that it has been difficult to settle on an evaluation that isn't made obsolete from week to week, or even from day to day.

Each time I concluded that I knew what was going on in the Iranian-Nicaraguan-Israeli-Swiss bank arms sale fiasco, some new revelation has provided another dimension to be evaluated. If political observers and the citizenry in general are a little confused by the current exposure of international arms intrigue, this is understandable.

The President says he didn't know what was going on in that he was 'not fully informed'. Secretary of State Shultz says that he was opposed to the deal and was not kept properly informed. The White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan says that he knew little about the whole matter. If these men are telling the truth about their ignorance, it is understandable if the citizenry is also in the dark.

As I write, the current White House contention is that Lt Col. Oliver North working as an aide to National Security Advisor Admiral John Poindexter concocted and executed a bizarre scheme to secure $12 million in arms from the Pentagon which were sent to Israel and then shipped to Iran. The Iranians apparently paid $30 million for the arms with either the entire $30 million or a major part of it deposited in a Swiss bank. The Nicaraguan contras fighting the Nicaraguan government were then permitted to draw these funds for the purchase of arms and other war materials.

IT WOULD APPEAR that all of this was done, at least in part, to circumvent US law which then blocked aid to the contra cause. The move violated a second US law which forbade arms sales to terrorist states such as Iran. Beyond this, the action threw US foreign policy into disarray by contradicting the keystone of Reagan foreign policy — a tough line against terrorism including an embargo against Iran. All of a sudden a President of almost unprecedented popularity seems to be in deep trouble. Widely read political writers and television commentators are now speculating on whether or not Reagan can salvage his Presidency.

A few short weeks ago most of these same observers were noting the remarkable popular approval of Reagan, his capacity to work his will on the Congress, the pathetic character of the Democratic opposition and the possible death of liberalism. Compared to his predecessor, Jimmy Carter, Reagan has enjoyed a six-year honeymoon with the national press, and with the Congress — until now.

> ***'There is danger in a President being excessively popular and winning a landslide victory as Reagan did in 1984 (over Mondale) or Richard Nixon did in 1972 (over me)...'***

But there is more to the current decline and disarray of the Reagan administration than the Iranian arms deal. A series of recent events has weakened the incumbent President's leadership position. The summer 'disinformation' campaign against Libyan leader Moammar Gadafy was an immature and amateurish game that backfired more against Reagan than it did Gadafy. It was designed to destabilise Gadafy but it opened a credibility gap with members of the American press who felt used and misled by the White House. 'Disinformation' is, after all, a high-sounding word that means official lying in public.

Then came the shooting down over Nicaragua of an American plane, with an American crew, carrying arms shipments from El Salvador to the contra forces in Nicaragua. The Reagan team said it had nothing to do with the arms mission, but the one surviving American said bluntly that he thought he was working under the direction of the CIA. Few Americans believe that the plane's sponsors were delivering arms to the contras without some kind of administration initiative if not secret sponsorship.

NEXT came the hurried, poorly prepared conference between Gorbachev and Reagan at Reykjavik. So many conflicting reports have come out of that conference that it has been difficult to know for certain what Reagan proposed.

It seems fairly clear, however, that Gorbachev and Reagan agreed to dismantle strategic missile systems over the next ten years, withdraw intermediate range missiles from Europe and enter into a comprehensive nuclear test ban — provided, the Russians insisted, that Reagan's Star Wars programme be limited to research only for the next ten years. Reagan refused to limit the Star Wars programme, however, so the deal fell through and the President came home emptyhanded, to the sorrow of the American peace movement, many members of Congress, and apparently the Secretary of State.

Finally, despite an extremely active and strenuous effort by Reagan to save Republican control of the Senate, the voters sent nine new Democrats to the Senate. Only one Senate seat currently held by a Democrat was lost — that of retiring Missouri Senator Thomas Eagleton. So Mr Reagan now faces a Democratically controlled Senate with 55 Democrats and 45 Republicans.

Those who were predicting the death of American liberalism a short time ago now see a significantly more liberal US Senate and modest but significant liberal gains in the House. Even among the eight new Republican Governors named in 1986, there is generally a more moderate to liberal philosophy than Reagan's. Of the nine new Democratic Senators, I would say that eight are in the tradition of American liberalism.

It is quite probable that the current 'scandal' swirling around the White House as a consequence of the strange Iranian arms deal will further weaken Reagan and enhance the political power of the Congress. At the least, Congress will investigate not only the operations of the Reagan White House, but will also be more critical of the Reagan policies. I believe that the Iranian arms connection and the apparent breaking of federal laws will lead to an end of the already shaky Congressional approval of US involvement with the contras. Congress never really has been sold on the Reagan effort to arm the contras; it will be less enthusiastic now.

In a general sense, it may be a blessed byproduct of the President's current predicament that it will

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restore a healthier balance between executive and legislative power. It is difficult for Congress to exercise its Constitutional checks and balances role against a President who is enormously popular and a 'great communicator.'

THERE IS danger in a President being excessively popular and winning a landslide victory as Reagan did in 1984 (over Mondale) or Richard Nixon did in 1972 (over me), or Lyndon Johnson in 1964 (over Goldwater). Such popularity and overwhelming election approval tends to encourage the 'arrogance of power' and the 'imperial Presidency' of which others have warned. Such 'arrogance' and 'imperial' impulses tend to produce high-handed presidents with a tendency to believe that they can operate beyond the reach of the Congress, the law and the Constitution. Such Presidential popularity also tends to intimidate and silence opposition politicians and to encourage a measure of awe and restraint by the press.

This administration from the beginning has seemed to attach unusual significance to the manipulation of popular approval. Reagan and his managers have tended to rate popularity above responsibility. But the signal Reagan is now communicating is that of a Presidency in disarray, confusion, contradiction and mindlessness. It is my hope that liberals in the United States will seize this moment not to call for the President's scalp, but to force a change in ill-conceived administration policies and procedures both at home and abroad.

As for the President, he came close to an historic agreement at Reykjavik that could have reversed the nuclear arms race. He has the conservative credentials and the dramatic skills to sell such an agreement to the Congress and to the country. If he, as a somewhat chastened and hopefully wiser President, will now seize on that opportunity to save the planet from nuclear annihilation, he could yet redeem the historic promise of his Presidency.

He urgently needs to give a full accounting and a genuine corrective to his blunders over Iran and Nicaragua. But these issues, after all, are secondary to the vastly larger challenge to an American President — managing the relationship with the other Super Power with a measure of intelligence, pragmatism, and common sense. The stakes there are the survival of the planet. □

'Well, I didn't wake up this morning, got those sacked-for-being-late-for-work blues'

LATIN AMERICA

Still Greeneland below the USA

Just back from a tour of Haiti, Paraguay and Chile,* HUGH O'SHAUGHNESSY *surveys the wretchedness of all three as 1986 draws to a close — no help to be expected from a giant northern neighbour always terrified, in Shultz's phrase, of a 'lurch to the left' in the underbelly

THERE IS no justice. Not, at least, in Latin America.

The terrorists attacking Nicaragua get all sorts of money and arms. The weapons flow in from Washington, Israel, Texas and now, we gather, through Canada. The money arrives from Brunei and Switzerland. There was doubtless a silver collection for the Contras the other day at that queer rally at the Barbican in London.

The cause of real democracy in other countries gets shorter shrift. Haiti, Paraguay and Chile are three cases in point.

'*Mécontentement generalisé*', proclaims *Le Petit Samedi Soir*, a weekly. Nearly a year after the overthrow of the Duvaliers six million Haitians are becoming very impatient indeed for an end to the caretaker rule of General Henri Namphy. If there was a denazification in Germany at the end of the war why, they say, can't they have a *déduvalierisation* after decades of sleazy dictatorship by Papa Doc and Baby Doc. They are not getting a very clear answer from the United States or any of the other Western democracies who are constantly wringing their hands about the state of affairs in the poorest republic in the Americas.

As anyone who has been to Port-au-Prince will attest, Haitians, for all their poverty, have a large store of justifiable national pride and self-respect. Two hundred years ago they staged the first black revolution in the world. The black slaves put a violent end to the bloody and insufferable régime of the French plantation owners and then beat off the best troops that Napoleon and the British government of the day could send against them.

They were of course made to suffer for it. Their own mistakes, taken with the malevolence of the great powers of the 19th century and the hostility of the Vatican, transformed France's richest colony into the slum that the country is today.

The black republic never, for instance, developed much grasp of technology. During the last war a German U-boat put into a small Haitian port and took aboard the supplies it needed to continue its raids on Allied shipping in the Caribbean. The US Navy was aghast and an officer was sent to the village to investigate. He quizzed the local magistrate who confirmed that the German had indeed taken fresh food aboard. There was however nothing to worry about, he added: 'After the door was closed there was a tragic mishap; the iron canoe sank to the bottom of the sea with everybody inside and was never seen again!'

Now in the hot, dusty and often fetid streets of Port-au-Prince the impatience to get away from Haiti's darker past of ignorance and dictatorship is palpable. In the cooler middle-class enclave of Pêtion-Ville in the mountains behind the capital, where graceful villas surrounded by palm trees look out over the plain of Cul de Sac and the sea beyond, there is the same impatience to get rid of the immediate past and of the louche image Graham Greene painted of the country in *The Comedians*.

Enough is Enough

Yet nearly a year after the flight of Baby Doc — *President à Vie* Jean-Claude Duvalier — many of the régime's criminals and fraudsters are still at large. Namphy, an honest soldier but no politician, seems unwilling to turn his back totally on *duvalierisme*. What is more, hopes for a political renaissance have been wrecked on the rocks for unemployment. The *Volontaires de la Sécurité Nationale*, the tonton macoutes, have been formally disbanded. But their spirit lives on in the casual brutality and the unthinking repression of General Namphy's army and police. Last month Haitians had had enough. The death of two men was the cause of great waves of unrest.

Charlot Jacquelin was a worker in the highly popular literacy campaign that the Catholic church is vigorously promoting in atonement for its past misdeeds. Two months back he disappeared in the hands of the authorities and the church put on a novena of prayer for him. As the prayers came to an end a vast crowd gathered on the Champ de Mars in Port-au-Prince to protest at his murder. Spontaneously, unbidden by any of the political parties, more than 100,000 Haitians came to clamour for real political freedoms, jobs and an end to hunger.

Heedless of the message, the Haitian army a few days later committed a bloody blunder. An army lieutenant, guarding a checkpoint, summarily killed a lorry driver who had been cheeky to one of his soldiers. The death was a signal for the country's drivers to quit their jobs and bring the country to a standstill. A general strike was called, against the advice of the cautious and intelligent Haitian Communist Party, and Haiti was in a coma for the best part of a week.

On the dome of the brilliant white Palais National where Namphy has his office the radar scanner revolves all day long on the watch for hostile aircraft. On the walls of the city the slogans in creole French stand out in red. 'Aba chomaj', down with unemployment, say some. 'Aba Ameriken', say others.

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Haitians cannot understand why Washington, which gave tacit support to the Duvaliers for decades, cannot do a bit more for the country now it is crying out for real elections and genuine democracy. After all, Washington's money is going to the contras.

IN A MORE MINOR key the same argument is heard in Asunción, the seat of South America's oldest dictatorship, that of the Paraguayan General Alfredo Stroessner.

For most of the first three decades this German immigrant's son was in power his relations with the US government ranged from the cordial to the casual. Jimmy Carter grumbled a bit, the other US presidents were happy enough to have a self-proclaimed anti-communist in charge of landlocked Paraguay. Now Washington has once again taken up a line of verbal criticism of Stroessner, now in his 33rd year in office. This is in line with Washington's desire to be seen as even-handed, attacking dictatorship in Paraguay with one hand and smiting 'tyranny' in Nicaragua with the other.

The trouble is that the US moves against Paraguayan dictatorship lack all the effort and conviction being invested in the drive against the Sandinistas. Behind the diplomatic reproofs of the General there is no scheme of sanctions, no threats to cut off loans, or withdraw ambassadors, or arraign Stroessener in the United Nations. There is no help for the opposition.

Stroessner starts work very early every morning in the Palacio de López. It is a modest arcaded building in the Victorian Gothic mode. Legend has it that its English architect won second prize in the competition for the construction of Keble College, Oxford. Sensibly not wanting his work to go to waste, he got the Paraguayans to buy the plans and put up his North Oxford dream on the tropical banks of the Paraguay River.

From the equally Gothic station two blocks away an ancient British wood-burning locomotive makes a weekly trip to the Argentine border with the international train. It enables passengers to travel in 18 hours the distance covered by the buses in four. Readers will remember how Eliza Lynch, the Cork-born mistress of the great Paraguayan dictator López, used to hold sumptuous balls at the station in the 1850s.

But Paraguayans, like Haitians, are wanting to turn their backs on dictatorship, ridicule and isolation. Like the Haitians they are getting precious little help from outside.

Camera Press

Stroessner of Paraguay — 32 years in office, acknowledged by Foggy Bottom to be a dictator, yet the US State Department only cuffs him with a velvet glove. The iron fist's for Nicaragua.

This year has seen the most serious public demonstrations against the dictatorship that Stroessner has ever undergone. Led by the doctors and nurses of the Hospital de Clínicas there have been marches in the streets to protest against the miserable wages in the medical profession. For a few weeks it looked as though the protest could spread throughout society. Stroessner's police saw that it didn't. Heads were cracked, the press was muzzled. Radio Charitas, the church's station, and Radio Nandutí, run by a Jewish opponent of Stroessner's, are jammed. Police with tear gas grenades wait outside the Hospital de Clinicas. Homeless squatters on agricultural estates in the country and on vacant plots in the city are imprisoned and beaten.

The US and the European embassies do nothing as the general breaks the treaty commitments to democracy he signed at the United Nations and in the Organization of American States. No money comes in to help the opposition. No arms are secretly channelled to those who are wanting to overthrow a real tyrant. It is left to voluntary bodies like Christian Aid and Oxfam to help the squatters, the political prisoners, and Stroessner's other victims.

If Stroessner is to be deposed it will most likely be done by the members of the Colorado Party which he hijacked in the 1950s. Cannier than Pinochet, who has sought to rule just with the support of the army, the Paraguayan dictator took over the Colorados, the country's traditional conservatives. Over the decades he has operated it as a refined instrument of political patronage to which every public servant is obliged to belong. 'You can't get a job as a municipal ratcatcher in this country if you aren't a Colorado', sighed one

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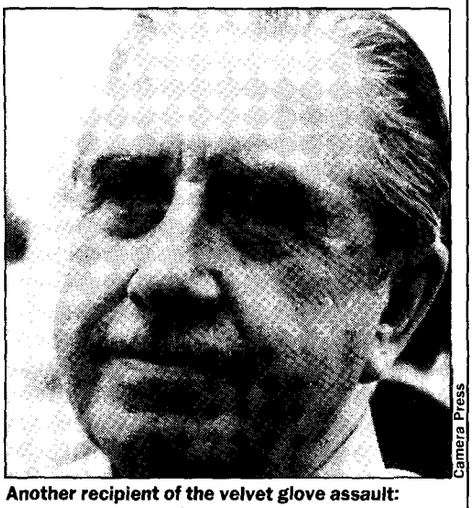
embittered Liberal.

Now, after 30-odd years, the more upright Colorados want their party back. It could be awkard for the general. Much more awkward than mild slaps on the wrist from the White House.

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S wrist-slapping technique is not getting very far either with General Augusto Pinochet in Chile. Deserted by



Camera Press

Another recipient of the velvet glove assault: Pinochet of Chile, with whom State is 'extremely cross'

the navy, air force and police, Pinochet is settling down in his bunker to outface his opponents and, if necessary, physically exterminate his enemies as he did so successfully in 1973.

For months this year the State Department put it about that the US government was extremely cross with Chile's head of state. A neo-conservative admirer of Pinochet was replaced in the US embassy in Santiago with a tougher-speaking envoy. The US Treasury warned it might well abstain on Chile's application for a big international loan. The mountains laboured and out came a ridiculous mouse. The US did indeed abstain on the loan but the Chileans were able to muster all the other support they needed. When some brave young men risked their lives in an attempt to asassinate Pinochet they were roundly told off by Washington for being terrorists. George Shultz warned of the dangers of a lurch to the left.

Meanwhile the democratic opposition is almost as divided and at odds with itself as it has been since Salvador Allende's death 13 years ago. The anti-Pinochet members of the middle-classes bicker at their ease in their villas and on their vineyards, beneficiaries whether they like it or not of the new divisions of wealth in the country.

In the *poblaciones* the poor rage impotently.

With luck the opposition parties will eventually make a deal with the anti-Pinochet military under which the General's desire for yet another term in office from 1989 is quietly blocked, and some grey civilian compromise figure is gingerly made president. Part of the deal would be that he does not prosecute any military men for their crimes.

In Santiago, as in Asuncíon and Port-au-Prince, Washington's diplomatic smiles and frowns are irrelevant. The continent's democrats realise they can expect little or no real help from the United States. □

'The phantom in Labour's opera'

As Labour's statement of basic beliefs moulders away uncompleted and unseen,* BERNARD CRICK *tackles the big one: by what* principles *are a future Labour administration's policies to be measured if they are not to be 'too easily moveable'

A SPECTRE is haunting the Labour Party — to make an unseasonal remark, the spectre of pure thought. We are in the middle of a remarkable revival of democratic socialist thought, this time led by political philosophers and social theorists rather than, as in the 1930s and '40s, economists — though straight away it must be said that the political philosophers I'll be talking about and stealing from are far more economically literate than a generation ago; just as most economists, not all, no longer wring their hands at political factors spoiling economic calculations but accept that the world is like that, and might be worse without.

There is a practical need to define not merely goals but also principles. 'Goals' define objectives and 'principles' define conduct: where should socialism be going and, quite as important, how should socialists behave in the great here and now, not just in public but in private life? We commonly use the word 'values' to cover both goals and principles. I will. But the distinction is often very important. Some dwell entirely in a world of theory and goals and their private lives carry no vestige of socialism except the subject matter of dinner table conversation — the trendies. David Edgar provided a Dickensian sketch of them at a Muswell Hill party in his *MayDays*.

Such people claim, of course, to be absolutely egalitarian in their love affairs — which may sometimes be true; but they are tactfully silent about that key question of empirical sociology, 'parents' class and income'. Others actually practice a life-style socialism, of demos, protests, women's rights, tenants' rights, advice centres, actually helping actual people in trouble. Most of these are aggressively working class and the social traveller has to work harder than ever Orwell did among tramps to be accepted. Many of them, however, are completely innocent of any precise or systematic thinking, simply one shot or two shot crusaders; and the claims made by ecologists, alternative-lifers, Greens and health fanatics to have a *comprehensive* ideology are embarrassing. Consistent and self-contained, yes; comprehensive no.

From a rather unlikely centre pure thought has broken out and is beginning, yes, to permeate. The Fabian Society held a large but private meeting after the election defeat of 1983 to discuss 'what should be done?' (by, was the unstated major premise, intellectuals). Those invited were all known to be democratic socialists whose discourse was public. Readers of the middle generation will know just what I mean: people who did not limit their thinking to the narcissistic question of the problems that the real world (such as a majority of the skilled working class voting Tory) *posed for Marxist theory*, and people who can write plain, accessible English. The idea arose to set up a philosophy group for democratic socialists.

Thirty years ago political philosophy had almost ceased to be a public discourse, had become an academic discipline, riven by demarcation disputes between Philosophy and Politics, each very internalised and given to such questions as 'does political philosophy exist?' and 'in what sense, if any, are ethical statements meaningful?' Philosophy, in other words, was still trying to escape from a moralistic and metaphysical tradition. But now the atmosphere is different. The debate is still largely internalised but philosophers are ceasing just to say 'meaning is usage' but to examine actual usages, especially of ethical and political — 'essentially contestable' — terms.

They try to examine the conceptual and value assumptions contained in practical activities and social problems. 'Animal Rights', 'The Protection of Privacy', fine; but before you charge off and spend your life on it and demand public resources, spare a moment's thought to

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define these terms more carefully. They carry no essential meaning, but if you don't adapt your usage to some well known convention, you won't be understood; and if you don't define the terms reasonably precisely any practical application — since concepts may sometimes be born individually but always live together in clusters — will be riven with contradictions.

SO A YOUNGER generation of political philosophers now think in that way and some sociologists and applied economists have seen the need and caught the style. The huge literature on equality is a good example: philosophical and empirical considerations are separable and must be; but good work knows the other, like the sociologist Julian Legrand and, in politics and social administration, Raymond Plant.

This style of thinking is still too speculative and unsystematic — usually taking one concept at a time, be it rights, liberty, equality, community needs, property etc. etc. — for the many ex-hard or ex-highbrow Marxists who are now coming to terms with democratic socialism. They begin to take seriously Tom Bottomore's old argument that Marxism must be seen as a method of social investigation not as a comprehensive structure of abstract ideas for which 'the correct policy, comrade' can be logically inferred.

Hobsbawm has said much the same, also Edward Thompson, both in an historical mode, whereas Bottomore advocates an eclectic sociology, making use of relevant theories and ideas from wherever they come. Nonetheless, the 'ex-s', liberal, democratic free or young Marxists, what you will, are often reaching the same kind of conclusions as these new Fabians by different routes and from different roots.

Mike Rustin's *Towards a Socialist Pluralism* is good common ground, as was Gavin Kitching's *Rethinking Socialism* with its uncomfortable argument that it is very difficult to create anything but a despotic socialism in a poor and underdeveloped country: equal citizenship is most easily built upon the accumulation of capital of an advanced capitalist society. This so shocked the trendy princes of the *New Left Review* that the book made little impact where it was aimed, though his view of stages was closer to Marx's than theirs and his experience of East Africa profound.

An actual bridge between the democratic Marxists and the Fabian group is Paul Hirst who has moved from being the high priest of British Althusserianism ('daddy, what was that?') into being an actual member of the Fabian Society, centre-Left Labour Party and taking up the cudgels so well in this journal for liberty in the sad Ruskin College (sub-judice) case. He is turning from Marx into a new Sidney Webb — and by god we need one.

What the new revisionist Marxists have in common with the New Fabians (besides freedom of the pages of *Marxism Today*) is pluralism and liberty, as well as equality. And in both philosophical and political senses. To the new Fabians, pluralism arises because any basic values however well defined must carry at least different shades of meaning in relation to the other values that a person or group must hold; philosophically these are incorrigible, there are no definitive, single or 'essential' true meanings, but not all are consistent with each other and some are more plausible than others or more practicable in policy.

To the new Marxists pluralism means accepting that not all values are ideologically determined by class or economic formation — even in his late Althusserian stage Hirst was talking about 'the relative autonomy of ideology'; but that nations, regions, ethnic groups, gender groups, say 'communities' (if that catch-all warm but smothering term is well-defined) can be good things in themselves, not all explained as malformations of class interest and economic exploitation. The sociological argument in Hobsbawm's famous *The Forward March of Labour Halted*? (don't forget the question mark) is crucial: that only for a brief period of the late industrial revolution was there *an* English working class. Now we are back in an earlier world of a plurality of working classes with different attitudes, needs and responses conditioned by regional culture and occupation. (Go on, he never said there wasn't such a thing as working class anymore, only *a* working class. Get it?).

> ***'Mixed-economy: a term so ill-defined as often to lead to both scepticism and fudge'***

Similarly for 'liberty', it is philosophically the negation of determinism. And if there are physical limitations to human life and activities, within them very important choices can be made: always choices, even when they are (in the happy lands) torturing you and escape is quite hopeless.

WHAT HAS all this to do with the Labour Party in its hour of hope and travail? Let me shelter behind Peter Kellner. On 28 November he gave his whole *New Statesman* column to a review of a Fabian pamphlet by members of the Socialist Philosophy Group, *Market Socialism: Whose Choice*? And John Lloyd wrote a full article about it where interest must be acute (I'm not joking), in the *Financial Times*.

The pamphlet is important, both for its manner and its content. It is speculative and analytical, not trying to reach any immediate and comprehensive policy conclusion. It comes from a group of people sharing most value assumptions but reasoning and differing among each other but without that familiar intent to club each other with cries of 'that's not true socialism'. Of course, as Kellner rightly concluded, the project must be to modify capitalism by regulation of markets in the public interest (defined as socialists would define public interest) not to modify state socialism.

Theirs is a welcome breath of realism. We have to start from where we are, in a capitalist mixed economy. The models of actual state socialism are not very appealing and the degree of command and centralisation has a lot to do with the absence of freedom and the suppression of pluralistic elements in such systems. Our own native model of the nationalised public corporation may be good for the big utilities and 'natural monopolies', but for little else.

Oh how different it might have been if the Polytechnics of the first part of this century had produced a generation of socialist engineers and managers (the mighty vision of Shaw and Wells). Or if MacDonald had had a working majority and had gone for democratic educational reform. But to go forward, we start from where we are and who we are. That is all that 'realism' means. But this new realism has a sense of direction, otherwise it would be mere time-serving (Wilsonian) pragmatism. The Fabian discussion was stimulated (Sally Jenkinson's contribution points out, as does David Miller and Saul Estrin's) by Alex Nove's *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*.

Of course the Labour Party believes in a mixed-economy. But the term is so ill-defined as often to lead to both scepticism and fudge. It needs clarifying. The Labour Party's new 'social ownership' policy has opened up the issues, to almost any interpretation, more than clarifying them. There is still a lot of resistance forthcoming in the party to facing reality. A quick glance at a bootleg set of proofs of Roy Hattersley's *Choose Freedom: The Future of Democratic Socialism* shows it to be a major work that devotes much thought to defining where markets are appropriate, where not and what kind of controls are needed.

People have made shibboleths of particular means but it is the ends that need spelling out and defining. To talk of realism without also talking of principles and of long term goals is, indeed, to invite accusations of time serving. Happily no one is more aware of this than Neil Kinnock. He is a true heir of Nye Bevan. He embodies the old Labour Left's good rhetoric of values. In a series of recent speeches he tried to delineate them — revive them indeed, after Wilson's abandonment, but to point them to modern conditions. There was his Mackintosh Memorial Lecture of June 1983, a shortened version of which appeared in this journal; his Fabian Autumn Lecture of November 1985, 'The Future of Socialism'; and his recent 'Righting the Wrongs of the New Right' to the Gorton Fabian Society on 11 September 1986.

The latter was a passionate attempt to claw back from the radical right the reputation of at least being the guardians of liberty. Bryan Gould made a good shot at the same task two years ago, in a book that used some of the Fabian group material. Kinnock deployed not just Tawney's classic argument that liberty for all needs a far greater equality of social condition, but is bold to argue that socialists must accept liberty against themselves. Council tenants don't have to vote Labour to have rights, and exercise individual choices. By implication it is fairly clear what the Leader thinks about boycotts on newspapers.

BUT WHEN Kinnock chose recently to make up a book from speeches and articles, it was from a group of addresses mainly to industry, *Making Our Way: investing in Britain's future*. They argue that Labour is the party that can get British industry working again. I suppose this was a tactical choice. It was well-meant. But a lot of it *sounded* (it hurts to say this) like the bombast of Wilson's first term. He still argues that 'the central role in British strategic planning must be performed by a Department of Trade and Industry', but, of course, not a passive one: 'what is needed is an active, entrepreneurial ministry, a

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ministry of movers, of new ideas, of new initiatives.' I'm frightened that this could just be words, that he hasn't thought it through; that the answers may lie more in the Fabian group's thoughts about controls on markets.

Where he could have given a lead would have been precisely in the area of those other speeches. Let me shelter behind Peter Kellner again. Just over a year ago he reported having seen on Geoff Bish's desk at Walworth Road a large bundle that was the first draft of a statement on the party's basic beliefs, commissioned by the NEC. What has happened to it? By now it is plainly still-born.

There are three theories: (i) That the leader likes the idea. So much that he can't let go of it himself, but with no time to redo it. (ii) That he fears to reopen old wounds on the NEC. The Benns and the Heffers still view themselves as the priests of the covenant of Labour's values, and that all other versions are merely pragmatic dilutions of their true if esoteric scroll, and to an astonishing extent the Right share this view. (iii) That the party secretary and the campaign team regard any such statement so close to an election as a hideous hostage to fortune; any reassurance and redirection it would give to party activists is more than offset by opportunities for mischief in the Tory Press.

But if there was such a document (and it is badly needed — win or lose) I think it fairly clear what it would contain. There is an authentic British democratic socialist tradition. Yes, an affirmation of *freedom* and of the social conditions needed for freedom for all, but not just the passive freedom of rights against the state (in the classic liberal tradition), but a positive freedom of active citizenship (in the French republican tradition, or that of 'Scottish democracy'). Yes, an affirmation of *equality*, but egalitarianism rather than literal equality: an application of the now famous argument of John Rawls (I couldn't care less that he is an American liberal) that all inequalities must be exposed and justified to show whether or not they serve the public interest.

YES, COMMUNITY, 'fraternity' or sociability (each term has some difficulties). We want the warmth, mutual aid and cooperation of true communities, but not, for instance, at the expense of the rights of women (there are communities and communities). Democratic socialists are humanists and heirs to the enlightenment, human rights must overide some customs of traditional communities. Just *think*.

Yes *and* no to the State. We need it to further the national welfare and to protect us, but democratic socialism is now, not only in Britain, very sceptical, almost hostile, to putting too much reliance on the state: cultural pluralism is a positive value now, not just a sociological description or the debris of imperfectly articulated class formations, etc. All power does corrupt: some levels are not safe. Or perhaps there is not a party statement of principles and goals because some of these things are still too divisive and need more thinking out, reasoning about and publicising. I gather that the *New Statesman* intends to commission more speculative articles on values and principles. Good. At last. Policies without solid foundations either collapse or are too easily moveable, dispensable after the meeting or election has been held. □

PERMANENT GOVERNMENT

Sir Sydney Carton of the Cabinet Office

Peter Hennessy

THE FIRST TIME I penned a portrait of Sir Robert Armstrong was in March 1977 when I was the Whitehall correspondent of *The Times* and he was about to become Permanent Secretary at the Home Office. He had transferred to the Home Office from No 10 two years earlier after five years as principal private secretary first to Ted Heath and then to Harold Wilson in his twilight Premiership. One of his first tasks as Home Office Deputy Secretary responsible, among other things, for security policy, was to improve the relationship between MI5 and its sponsoring ministry, for reasons to which we are all now privy thanks to Peter Wright's remarks about anti-Wilson plots.

In 1977 Armstrong's reputation was high. I tipped him for the Cabinet Secretaryship which he duly acquired two years later. I concluded with a passage that now has a poignant air (I have always liked Sir Robert) given the slow destruction of his reputation in a Sydney courtroom. It read:

> Mr Armstrong has little to learn about the stately minuet that has to be danced in the rarefied reaches of Whitehall. His footwork during the Lady Falkender years at No. 10, for example, can only be described in the words Churchill used of Arthur Balfour's transition from the Asquith to the Lloyd-George cabinet in 1916: He was 'like a powerful and graceful cat walking delicately and unsoiled across a rather muddy street'.

As Cabinet Secretary Sir Robert has had a rough ride. The job description has traditionally required its holder to be very eminent, very *grise*, and very hidden. Cabinet Secretaries since Sir Maurice Hankey have been forbidden to keep diaries. The third (Sir Norman Brook) threatened the first (Hankey) with the Official Secrets Act in the late fifties when the old man wanted to publish his memoirs of the *First* World War.

> ***Like a powerful and graceful cat walking delicately and unsoiled across a rather muddy street***

Armstrong's predecessor, Sir John Hunt, had to endure a courtroom cross-examination over the Crossman Diaries in 1975. Shortly after, I met the great Dame Evelyn Sharp. 'It would *not* have happened in Norman Brook's time', she told me. Hunt's tenure at Cabinet Office was as calm as a millpond compared to Armstrong's, which has seen one public controversy after another — Blunt (1979), GCHQ (1985), Top People's Pay (1985), Westland (1986) and, most damaging of all, The Wright Affair. The 'graceful cat' now looks very muddy indeed and not just to those sections of the population which always relish the sight of the mighty fallen from their seats.

Sir Robert's job requires him to possess the confidence of all potential Prime Ministers, not just the present occupant of No 10. Over the Wright affair, Neil Kinnock has played the issue not the man; not so David Steel and David Owen. For Mr Steel, GCHQ, Westland and the Wright trial have left Sir Robert as 'damaged goods'. For Dr Owen 'his credibility is at a very low ebb . . . he's become a civil servant who's very much seen as a supporter of the government.' This is not how Sir Robert, for those who know him, see it at all, but they are not in the running for Premiership.

> ***The graceful cat now looks very muddy indeed, and not just to those who relish the sight of the mighty fallen from their seats***

Sir Robert post-Wright seems to me to have two choices. First to ask Mrs Thatcher to let him retire when he was originally intended to, on reaching the age of 60 next Easter. When she requested him to stay on during the summer, he suggested that she consult the Leader of the Opposition as had been traditional in the appointment of past Cabinet Secretaries. She refused. When Callaghan picked Sir Ian Bancroft to replace Sir Douglas Allen as head of the Home Civil Service in 1977 he refused to consult *her*. Mrs Thatcher found out and has taken belated revenge. Sir Robert could reopen the question and go, acknowledging with regret that he has become a controversial figure. He would be doing, like Sydney Carton, on the scaffold, 'a far, far better thing . . .'

His other option is to stick it out and stay to show that his cherished belief — that British civil servants are politically neutral and permanent — still has life and validity. That, too, would have a touch of the Sydney Cartons about it, as in effect he would be laying down his reputation for the profession he loves. My hunch is that Sir Sydney Carton will still be at his desk come the summer. □

Peter Hennessy is a Visiting Fellow at the Policy Studies Institute.

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IF THE CAPTION FITS...

NOW THAT *Private Eye* and Robert Maxwell are locked in mortal combat — leather-hided dinosaurs in Fleet Street's primordial swamp, bellowing and grappling — both sides have entirely lost their sense of humour. Well, poor old Cap'n Bob has, who was always good for a laugh before. *Private Eye* never did have a sense of humour, did it? Went downhill, never been the same, since Richard Ingrams took over, twenty-five years ago was it?

And now Ingrams has retired (Satyriasis Cottage, Buttonhole Lane, High Dudgeon, Glos.) and Auberon Waugh has gone off his head and become an editor — he was never a writer, was he? This *is* a departure — and a young man called Burlap or Hassock or Mudlark is reducing the *Private Eye* covers to levels of tedium unparallelled except in the journals of respectable undertakers and *Punch* — now that all this has happened and only Tebbit is still good for a hoot, YOUR CHANCE HAS COME!

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As always, the judges' decision (US Supreme Court, Euro Court, Nobel Prize Committee, and Mr Justice Pickles) will not only be final but eccentric to a degree. A single brilliant caption or bubble may as easily win you the big one as a vicious set of six. Married persons should not enclose a photograph or they will instantly be disqualified for heterosexism and invited to dinner. ●

South Coast Press Agency

(1) Who would have thought that even Mrs T has to wear an identification badge at Tory Conference? What's she saying? — or doing? — what's anyone there saying?

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PA

(2) You're right, it *is* Edwina Currie (on top, where else?) but no she isn't eating someone from the North. That's a life-saving dummy. Thinks . . .

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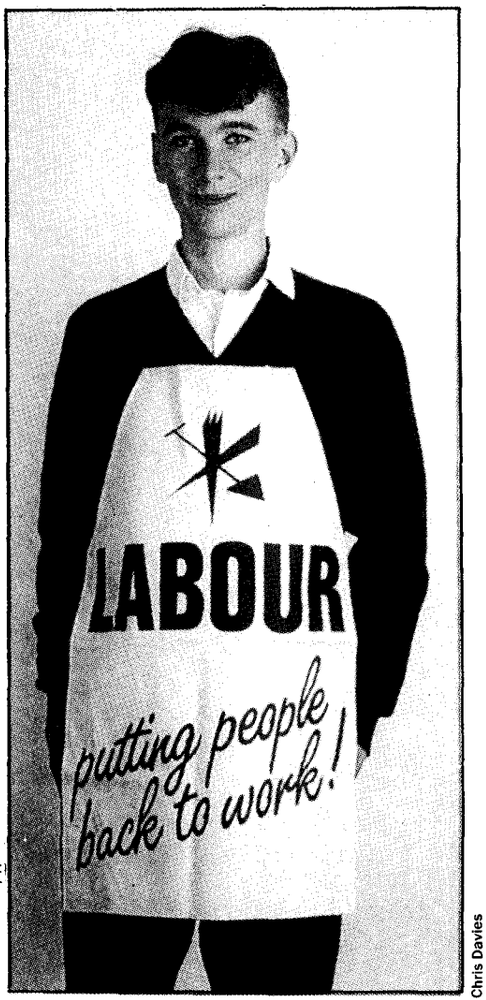
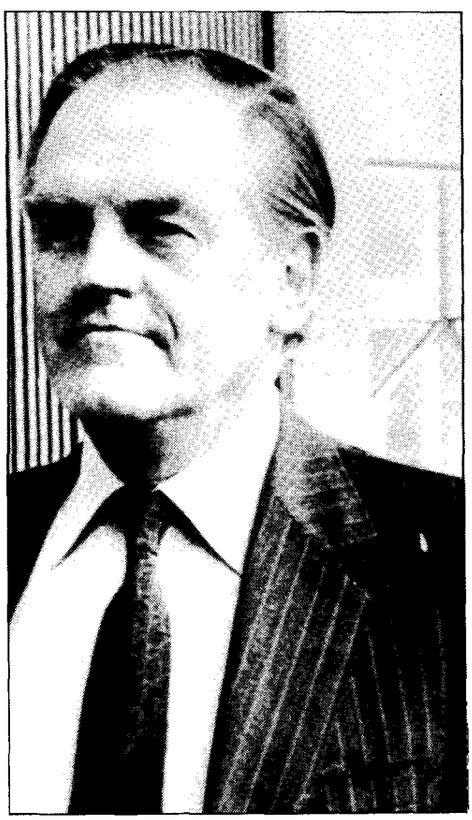
PA

(3) On the left the reporter from the *Sun*. No, no, we joke . . . er, maybe. If not, it must be a creature from the *Labyrinth* movie premiere, and over there on the right is 'er next door, wots-er-name, unrecognisable without her tiara. Thinks . . .



Chris Davies

(4) Intrepid *New Statesman* reporter John Rentoul — we kid you not — modelling this year for the new designer Labour Party. Thinks . . .



AP

(5) Lord Economical of the Truth (prediction for New Year's Honours List, on a Labour recommendation) but still plain Sir Robert Armstrong for now, grinning and bearing it in Sydney, Oz. Thinks . . .

(6) She's looked up the Yellow Cab number in the book; he's hailing one; will *anything* get them to the inauguration on time? Thinks . . .

Rex Features

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'Only the best for the Lord'

Jeanette Winterson

IT WAS Christmas Eve.

'Who's got the harmonium?' said my mother.

The harmonium had gone ahead with the tambourines and Mrs Smalley's tin leg; she liked her leg but she didn't like to have it with her all the time, especially as it acted as a primitive receiver for my mother's CB radio.

'I can't hear the words but I get a terrible tremor as far as the knee' she told us, 'I'm wondering if it would be better with a wooden one.'

'Not where you live, right by the sewerage works, it's always damp in your kitchen in July. You'll not be able to take that leg off without wrapping it in plastic,' said her friend, Joyce.

'You can treat good wood these days, veneering they call it. I could get my leg done same as they treat that panelling down at the swimming baths. I never wanted a tin one anyway, it makes a noise when you bump into things and when I flew to the Isle of Wight I set off the terrorist alarms. Three men with guns pointing at my throat.'

'Get in the bus,' said my mother, 'we're going to be late and I've got to start broadcasting.'

We were on our way to an old people's home to tell the Christmas Story and bring glad tidings to the cheerless. Our church was very keen on the Gospel and, according to the pamphlet on Outreach we'd lately memorised, Jesus had a natural advantage at certain times of the year: Who can resist a baby? 'There's never a dry eye at Christmas,' our Pastor said. 'Even the drunks, even the fornicators and those lost in Unnatural Passions, shed tears of remorse at the sight of a crib.'

We had our portable crib with us. It was an orange box stuffed with straw from Mrs White's guinea pig business and boasting a doll with a china head. 'Only the best for the Lord,' said the Pastor.

And not only the best. Knowing how the Lord has always enjoyed special effects — the parting of the Red Sea, the feeding of the five thousand, Jonah and the Whale — my father fixed a light bulb into the china head and, by means of some cunning circuitry, arranged for it to flash on and off at the most thrilling parts of the story. So when we got to the bit where the Wise Men kneel at the feet of the Christ child, his head suddenly lit up and shone bright yellow on the community. There was always a gasp at this point and the Pastor had urged my father to develop his light bulb theme more fully.

'You have a gift,' he said, 'and what God has given we must not presume to waste.' My father had been very mysterious for some weeks about quite how he was developing his gift but we felt confident that the crib would again be a success.

My father is a very quiet man and only showed emotion once, when our pet tortoise, Psalms, was cruelly drowned at Llandudno.

'He's quiet but he's deep,' said my mother.

Deep indeed and the proud possessor of the best collection of flashlights in England. (He had invented one called Lord Shaftsbury that ran on milk and was distributed to ease the sufferings of single parents breastfeeding in their dark and filthy hovels.) From this hobby he had gleaned his expert knowledge of bulbs and wires and what to do with them.

'There's nothing your father doesn't know about Dry Cell,' my mother often repeated proudly.

I had helped her wrap his present that day. It was a replica of the Humphrey Davy mining Lamp, a marvellous invention which saved the lives of thousands of canaries originally used to detect gas before the miners lit their candles. Imagine standing in the mine and suddenly the singing stops . . .

Imagine how the canary felt.

'Yes,' said my mother going over to our canary's cage as she cut the holly sellotape, 'if it hadn't been for Humphrey Davy, little orange Peggy might never have been born. How could she have been with her ancestors gassed?!

It was a sobering thought.

AS WE DROVE to the old people's home, my mother put on her headphones and spoke to electronic believers across the North West. Her handle was Kindly Light and she had a lively correspondence going with a CB group in Wigan who called themselves The Last Days. Just as she was urging the flock, wherever they may be, to join her in a word of prayer, an interference band cut

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her reception and brought us Radio Caroline from the North Sea. For a moment we were awash in Perry Como roasting chestnuts over an open fire, then my mother flicked the switches and, finding nothing but static, switched over and out and declared that Satan was in command of the air waves.

'Try again on the way home,' comforted Mrs Smalley. 'Though I do like Perry Como; I've got one of his records.'

My mother glared at her and turned back to her large-print copy of the Bible. I was relieved when we arrived at our destination and bundled out with boxes of mince pies and two hundred Mars Bars my father had won in the Works raffle. I had spent all day sticking promises from the Word on the wrappers of these Mars Bars so that no Unbeliever could eat without first confronting Jesus.

The home, a comforting one-storey arrangement surrounded by mature pine, seemed unusually quiet. We pushed our way through the double fire doors and past the notices that said 'HERE WE CARE' until we came to the hall decorated with expensive tinsel and a huge tree. It was brightly lit and empty.

A nurse came forward carrying a catheter and a sprig of holly. She told us that the inmates had gone to a tea dance that afternoon and been unable to return thanks to thick fog on the motorway. They were staying in a Trusthouse Forte somewhere near Cheadle Hulme.

'On the ratepayers, no doubt,' said my mother stiffly.

The Pastor whispered to her to remember the spirit of Christmas.

'Oh well, if we're not performing I don't need to put my leg back on do I?' asked Mrs Smalley. 'It's not that good a fit, it's just in company you feel a bit self-conscious with only one.'

The nurse suggested that we perform for the on-duty staff and grudgingly my mother agreed to play carols on the harmonium, though only on condition that the staff listened to the sermon as well as enjoying the hymns. She liked a big audience and finding that the cheerless and decrepit inhabitants of the home were in fact having a night on the town had made her feel like Jonah arriving by whale at Ninevah only to find he wasn't needed anymore. She deliberately played everything too high but, while we ruined our throats, the nurses, who all sang soprano in the Oswaldtwistle Choir, had a fine time. It wasn't until we gathered round the crib to sing 'While Shepherds Watched' that we realised what my father had done.

He had wired the baby Jesus light to sound.

As my mother played, ripples of red ran round the Holy Infant. As she changed chords, his arms flashed blue and green like some God-given jumblie and, when she pressed the hard pedal, his head lit up in the normal way, though in correspondence with his toes.

'It's to show he's not like other children,' explained my father.

The nurses were very impressed and one even said she'd start coming to our church if this was the sort of thing we did. My mother was mollified and offered her a few of the Mars Bars and said that was the trouble with the Church of England, they never used their imagination.

I wondered if I'd overdone it with mine; would my mother really like the self-assembly kit of The Tower of Babel waiting for her under the tree at home?

To late for worry now. It was Christmas Day. □

God bless us all!

Fay Weldon

CHRISTMAS IS for the employed, in the same way that *Monopoly*, building society saving accounts, weekend cottages and marked-up copies of the *Radio Times* are for the employed: for those who know where work ends and life begins and can dole out spare time and cash accordingly. God bless them all!

Christmas is not for the self-employed, who see the race of office-employed giving up work from the beginning of December to the second week in January (Monday 12th, I reckon, this year) and leaving the former's cheques and postal drafts stuck in computers. Telephones in the meantime are answered after many rings by jovial people whose voices sound of sherry and balloons and know where no one is. God bless them all! I include the unemployed in the category of self-employed. Being unemployed is hard work: it is dealing with an obdurate bureaucracy for very small wages in dismal conditions. Whatever happened to the Claimants' Union?

Christmas, or such is my experience, is when

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staff get fired. In the days of my employment I lost three jobs in mysterious circumstances, each time in Christmas week. The first was when I was secretary/bargirl for the Folio Society. Was it that my typing was so bad, my recommendations on book choice so eccentric, or that, come the festive season, I failed to charge for the drinks I poured? No turkey that year. The second was when I worked for Pearl and Dean, just before ITV started up. We were writing TV commercials. None of us had ever seen one. We worked from first principles. Anthony 'Sleuth' Shaeffer worked at the desk next to mine. We were run from New York. The department closed down on December 19th. One week in lieu. No turkey that year either, for me or the little ones.

The third was when I worked for Ogilvy Benson & Mather. I was a consultant copy writer. Was it that they'd truly lost a big account, or was it that I laughed aloud once at a Board Meeting, when the Directors sang in cracked grey-suited voices 'cheep cheep cheep little chicken, lay a little egg for me, I haven't had one since Easter and I want one for my tea', or was it my habit of charging on my time sheet an average of 31 hours a day, in order to be paid the money I thought I deserved, or was it that that year the Bank asked me to their Christmas party — I was writing TV plays and had a source of income other than OBM — and I went, and there were the Directors, and they were not pleased to see their humble employee there?

No. Perhaps I was writing TV plays in their time? I was. They were right to rid themselves of my services, one way and another. God bless us all. I was in time to collect my free Christmas turkey, that year. I had learned to look after myself. The firm had a Turkey account — the first ripple of that tidal wave of white denatured flesh which now sweeps over us every year.

Christmas is for shopkeepers, who can get rid of so much festive junk, but not for shop assistants, who exhaust themselves pre-Christmas, have two days off (sometimes only one) and then return to set up the New Year Sales.

Christmas is for six year olds — peak year for the experience. After that it's never the same again. It positively saddens older children. At the local comprehensive Rock Nativity this year the song sung with most feeling and most applauded went:

> What game are you playing, Lord?
> Why do you do what you do?
> What game are you playing, Lord?
> How can we trust you?

How indeed.

IT WAS A splendid, vigorous, moving performance by Wells Blue Comprehensive in Somerset. Theology has come a long way since I was at school: Jesus is seen as a political figure: the nativity itself a form of memorial service for Herod's massacred infants. It makes all too much sense to today's young, fitting in with the headlines. It does not make sense to me that 'O' and 'A' Levels in Drama and Music — the way up and out for talented but not necessarily academic children — are in danger of being stopped for lack of funds, here as elsewhere. While the computer courses thrive. What sort of preparation for leisure is this?

Christmas is not for anyone who likes, in the run-up period, to find the cornflakes on their usual shelf at the supermarket. They have been hidden to make way for Marzipan Delights. Christmas is not for the old, the solitary, anyone who cannot afford an Inter-City Fare (they go *up* at Christmas) to get home, the mentally ill, women who go into labour (who's manning the Caesarian tables?), mistresses whose married lovers drift off home to wives and children, or for career women (as they used to be called) as the world of work collapses into a swoony, moony, domestic mess.

Christmas is for the wilfully childless, who have time and money to wrap presents properly and pile them neatly in the back of the car, but not for the childless against their will, for whom the season is unendurably painful.

Well, well: God bless us all. Shred the Marzipan Delight into the cracked bowl and serve with sugar (brown) and milk (skimmed). We are creatures of habit, not very sensible. Our contemporary Christmas suggests that we feel better, just sometimes, if we all act together, in our millions, in a ritual orchestrated by the media, getting back into our cosy village once again; that we live in the West in almost unbearable surplus, and don't have enough to occupy our souls, our minds or our time. That we just haven't enough to do. That the Luddites were right. We should have smashed the machinery while there was still time. And a happy Christmas to you all. Truly. □

'I intend to ignore the tenets of civilised behaviour and flout the existing conventions of the day — just as soon as I can find out what they are.'

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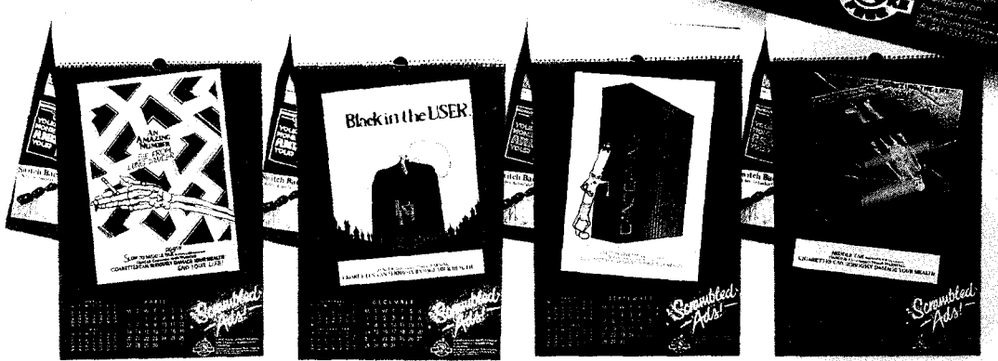

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Jackie Morris

The ghost lemurs of Madagascar

William S. Burroughs

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THE FIRST NAME of the libertarian pirate Captain Mission, or Misson, is lost to history. All that we know of Mission comes from the book, *A General History of the Most Notorious Pirates*, published in London in 1724, and written by one Captain Charles Johnson (although one historian attributes this to Defoe). The memoirs of Mission, handwritten in French, were saved by a member of the crew who survived Mission's last ship, and after passing through several hands they were translated by Johnson and included in his book.

Mission came from a wealthy Provençal family, and studied humanity, logic, and mathematics at the University of Angers in the late 17th century. His first commission was a French man-o-war called the *Victoire*, mounting thirty guns and commanded by a distant cousin. They sailed first to Naples and Mission travelled to Rome, where he met a young priest named Signor Caraccioli. While Mission was making his confession, he was surprised to discover the young priest shared his own disgust for the hypocrisy of earthly power, temporal and spiritual. Caraccioli threw off his frock, and signed onto the *Victoire*.

The frigate engaged and defeated two Algerian vessels, Caraccioli receiving a thigh wound. Other engagements were successful. The *Victoire* crossed the Atlantic, and off Martinique in the Caribbean they were set upon by the English *Winchelsea*, commanded by Captain Opium Jones. The first broadside killed the captain, second captain, and three lieutenants, whereupon Mission commanded the men, Caraccioli at his side, and they repulsed the English. Mission was named Captain by the whole crew, and for their pirate flag they raised a white ensign with 'Liberty' painted on it.

After many other adventures on the Guinea coast and West Africa, joined now by a captured English ship and crew, they helped the Queen of Johanna wage war on the neighboring island of Mohilla, both islands lying between Mozambique and the great red island, Madagascar. They took a Portuguese ship, and decided to settle down permanently on Madagascar. Here, around 1700 AD, on a remote harbor at the north end of the island, Mission built two great octagonal forts and with his band of several hundred French and English pirates, renegade seamen, and freed slaves, he established the free colony of Libertatia.

Together with his lieutenant Caraccioli, and the converted English pirate Captain Thomas Tew, Mission formulated a set of Articles by which the settlement might live in peaceful democracy. These Articles were remarkably like the ideas of Rousseau and the French and American revolutions of the late 18th century – and preceded them by more than sixty years. There would be no capital punishment, no slavery, no imprisonment for debt, and no interference with religion or sexuality. Signor Caraccioli divided the men into groups of ten, called States, and the position of Lord Conservator was established, as well as an annual plenary meeting. This first meeting lasted ten days. Tew was made Admiral, Caraccioli Secretary of State, and Mission became his Supreme Excellence the Lord Conservator.

On a cruise off southern Madagascar, Captain Tew and some English sailors he had recruited were marooned when they drank rum punch too late on the last night, as the tide rose and carried the noble *Victoire* out to sea, where she cracked up on the rocks. The crew was lost, and Tew pitched a makeshift camp where he would wait to be rescued.

* * * *

THE WORD Lemur means Ghost in the native language. There were taboos against killing them, and Mission had imposed an Article that prohibited the killing of Ghosts, on penalty of expulsion from the settlement. If any crime deserved the death penalty, also prohibited under the Articles, then this was that crime.

He was seeking a different Lemur species, described by a native informant as much bigger . . . like a calf, or a little cow.

'Where are the big Ghosts?'

The native gestured vaguely inland. 'You must be careful of the Evil Lizard that changes its colours. If you fall under its spell, you too will change colours. You too will turn black with anger, and green with fear and red with sex . . .'

'Well, what is so wrong about that?'

'In a year you will die. The colours will devour your skin and flesh.'

'You were talking about a big Ghost. Bigger than a goat . . . Where are they to be found?'

'When you hear Chebahaka, Man-in-the-Trees, then Big One not there. Her cannot be where noise is.'

'Her?'

'Her. He. For Big Ghost is the same.'

'So him is where Man-in-the-Trees isn't?'

'No. He is when Man-in-the-Trees is silent.'

This occurred at dawn and sunset.

Captain Mission strapped on his double-barreled flintlock, which he kept loaded with shot charges, and thrust a short sword through his belt. He picked up his staff and walked out through the settlement, stopping here and there to talk to the settlers.

'The first broadside killed the captain, second captain, and three lieutenants, whereupon Mission commanded the men . . . and they repulsed the English. Mission was named Captain by the whole crew, and for their pirate flag they raised a white ensign with Liberty painted on it.'

They had found an excellent red clay for bricks, and were constructing two-story dwellings with second-story balconies supported by heavy hardwood pillars. These buildings had been joined to form a tier, with the dining and kitchen areas in the two downstairs rooms and the sleeping and dressing areas upstairs. The balconies were connected and were used for sleeping hammocks and pallets. These structures faced the sea, and steps led down to the bay, where a number of boats were moored.

Mission was heading inland, up a steep path that levelled off at five hundred feet above the sea. He stopped, leaning on his staff, and looked back. The steep climb had not touched his breath nor brought sweat to his face. He saw the settlement, the freshly molded red bricks and thatch already timeless as houses in fairyland. He could see the shadows under the pier, the lurking fish, the clear blue water of the bay, the rocks and foliage, all floating in a limpid, frameless painting.

Silence descended like a shroud that would crumble to dust when he moved. Now a cat's-paw of wind frisked across the bay and up through the ferns and leaves, bringing to his face a breath of Panic. Little ghost paws rippled up his spine, stirring the hairs at the nape of his neck, where the death center flares briefly when a mortal dies.

Captain Mission did not fear Panic, the sudden, intolerable knowing that everything is alive. He was himself an emissary of Panic, of the knowledge that Man fears above all else: the truth of his origin. It's so close. Just wipe away the words and look.

He moved through giant ferns and creepers in green shade without need of his cutlass, and stopped on the edge of a clearing. A moment of arrested motion, then a bush, a stone, a log moved, as a tribe of ring-tailed cat lemurs appeared, parading back and forth around each other, tails quivering above their heads. Then *whisk* – they were gone, drawing the space where they had been away with them. In the distance he could hear the cries of the sifaka lemur the natives called Chebahaka, Man-in-the-Trees.

With a quick motion he caught a grasshopper and knelt by a moss-covered log. A tiny face with round eyes and large trembling ears peered at him nervously. He held out the grasshopper, and the little mouse lemur fell upon it with chirping squeaks of delight, holding it in his tiny paws and nibbling quickly with his tiny needle teeth.

Mission moved towards the sound, which was louder and louder. The Chebahakas saw him now, and they let out a concerted shriek that pierced his eardrums. Then suddenly the sound stopped, with an impact that threw him to the ground. He lay for some minutes in a half-faint, watching the grey shapes swing away through the trees.

Slowly he rose to his feet, leaning on his staff. Before him stood an ancient stone structure, overgrown with creepers and green with moss. He stepped through an archway, stone slabs under his feet. A large snake, of a glistening bright green, glided down the steps leading to a basement room. At the far end of the room an arch opened to admit the afternoon light, and he could see the stone walls and ceiling.

At the end of the room was an animal that looked like a small gorilla or a chimpanzee. This surprised him, since he had been told there were no true monkeys on the island. The creature was completely motionless, and black, as if formed out of darkness. He saw also a large pig creature of a light pink color, lolling on its side against the wall to his right.

Then, directly in front of him, he saw an animal that looked at first like a small deer. The animal came to his outstretched hand and he saw that it had no horns. Its snout was long, and he glimpsed sharp teeth shaped like little scimitars. The long, thin legs ended in cable-like fingers. The ears were large, flaring forward, the eyes limpid amber in which the pupil floated like a glittering jewel, changing color with shifts of the light: obsidian, emerald, ruby, opal, amethyst, diamond.

Slowly the animal raised one paw and touched his face, stirring memories of the ancient betrayal. Tears streaming down his face, he stroked the animal's head. He knew he must get back to the settlement before dark. There is always something a man must do in time. For the Deer Ghost there

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was no time.

Faster and faster downhill, tearing his clothing on rocks and thorny vines, and by dusk he was back at the settlement. He knew at once that he was too late, that something was horribly wrong. No one would meet his eye. Then he saw Bradly Martin, standing over a dying lemur.

Mission could see that the Lemur had been shot through the body. He felt a concentration of rage, like a hot red wave, but there was no reciprocal anger in Martin.

'Why?' Mission choked out.

'Stole my mango,' Martin muttered indifferently.

Mission's hand flew to the butt of his pistol.

Martin laughed. 'You would violate your own Article, Captain?'

'No. But I will remind you of Article 23: If two parties have a disagreement that cannot be settled, then the rule of the duel is applicable.'

'Aye, but I have the right to refuse your challenge, and I do.' Martin was an indifferent swordsman and a poor pistol shot.

'Then you must leave Libertatia, this very night, before the sun shall set. You have no more than an hour.'

Without a word, Martin turned away and walked off in the direction of his dwelling. Mission covered the dead lemur with a tarpaulin, intending to take the body into the jungle and bury it the following morning.

In his quarters Mission was suddenly overcome by a paralyzing fatigue. He knew that he should follow Martin and settle the matter, but – as Martin had said – his own Articles . . . He lay down and fell immediately into a deep sleep. He dreamed that there were dead lemurs scattered through the settlement, and woke up at dawn with tears streaming down his face.

Mission dressed and went out to get the dead lemur. The lemur and the tarpaulin were both gone. With blinding clarity he understood why Martin had shot the lemur, and what he intended to do: he would go to the natives and say that the settlers were killing the lemurs and that, when he objected, they turned on him and he had barely escaped with his life. Lemurs were sacred to the natives in the area, and there was the danger of bloody reprisal.

In a prerecorded and therefore totally predictable universe, the blackest sin is to tamper with the prerecordings, which could result in altering the prerecorded future. Captain Mission was guilty of this sin. He threatened to demonstrate for all to see that three hundred souls can coexist in relative harmony with each other, with their human neighbors, and the ecosphere of flora and fauna.

Big Ben strikes the hour. In a muted ghostly room, the custodians of the future convene. Keepers of the Board Books: Mektoub, it is written. And they don't want it changed.

'If three hundred men – then three thousand, thirty thousand. It could spread everywhere. It must be stopped *now*.'

'Our man Martin is on target. Quite reliable.'

A woman leans slightly forward. An arresting face of timeless beauty and evil, an evil that stops the breath like a deadly gas. The Chairman covers his face with a handkerchief.

She speaks in a cold, brittle voice, each word a chip of obsidian: 'There is a more significant danger. I refer to Captain Mission's unwholesome concern with *lemurs*.'

The word slithers out of her mouth writhing with hatred.

Mission had smoked opium and hashish and had used a drug called Yage by the Indians of South America. There must, he decided, be a special drug peculiar to this huge island, where there are so many creatures and plants not found anywhere else. After some inquiries he found that such a drug did exist: it was extracted from a parasitic fungus that grew only on a certain spiny plant found in the arid regions of the South.

The drug was called Indris, which means 'look there' in the native language. With the promise of five gold florins on delivery, he obtained a small supply from a friendly native. The drug was in the form of greenish yellow crystals. The man, whose name was Babuchi, showed him exactly how much to take, and cautioned him against taking any more.

'Many take Indris and see nothing different. Then they take more, and see too much different.'

'Is this a day drug or a night drug?'

'Best at dawn and twilight.'

Mission calculated an hour till sundown – enough time to reach his jungle camp.

'How long does it take to work?'

'Very quick.'

Mission set out walking rapidly. Half an hour later, he took a small amount of the crystals with a sip of water from his goatskin water-bag. In a few minutes he experienced a shift of vision, as if his eyes were moving on separate pivots, and for the first time he saw Lizard-who-changes-color. It was quite large, about two feet in length, and difficult to see, not because it took on the colors of its surroundings, but because it was absolutely motionless. He moved closer to the lizard, who brought one eye to bear on him and turned black with rage. Evidently Lizard-who-changes-color did not like to be seen. His colors subsided, to a neutral orange-yellow mottled brown. And there was a gurkha lizard on a limb, as if carved from the bark. He winked a golden eye at Mission.

Despite the need for vigilance, Mission was spending more and more time in the jungle with his lemurs. He had converted the ancient stone structure he had found into a dwelling. It was completely enveloped by the roots of a huge bulbous tree, as if held in a giant hand. The open arch in the second room was festooned with roots. There was a paved floor. He had covered the entrance with mosquito netting and arranged a pallet on the floor. Brushing the floor, he was surprised to find few insects, certainly no venomous varieties. The stone steps were worn smooth, as if with the passage of many feet, perhaps not human feet. Who, or what, could have built this structure, and for what purpose?

Since his first encounter he had located a troop of the larger lemurs. These lemurs were too big and heavy to be comfortable in arboreal conditions and lived mostly on the land, in an area of grass and scrub where the forest thinned out, a mile from his campsite. Ideal grazing land, Mission realized with a shudder. The creatures were so trusting and gentle and open to human affection.

Mission hurried on. He wanted to reach the ancient stone structure before twilight, and he hoped his special lemur would be there. He often slept with the lemur beside him on his pallet, and had named the lemur 'Ghost'.

'In a prerecorded and therefore totally predictable universe, the blackest sin is to tamper with the prerecordings, which could result in altering the prerecorded future. Captain Mission was guilty of this sin. He threatened to demonstrate for all to see that three hundred souls can co-exist in relative harmony with each other, with their human neighbors, and the ecosphere of flora and fauna. Big Ben strikes the hour. In a muted ghostly room, the custodians of the future convene. Keepers of the Board Books: Mektoub, it is written. And they don't want it changed.'

As he walked up, Ghost gave a little chittering cry of welcome. Mission took off his boots and hung his outer garments on wooden pegs driven into chinks in the stone wall. The only furniture was a table of rough-hewn planks supported on two logs, with an inkpot, quill, pens, and parchment. In one corner was a small keg with a spigot for water, some cooking utensils, an axe, a saw, hammers, a musket. Powder and shot were kept in the foot locker.

Mission sat at the wooden table beside his phantom, his Ghost, contemplating the mystery of the stone structure. Who could have built it?

WHO?

He poses the question in hieroglyphs . . . a feather . . . he chooses a quill pen. Water . . . the clear water under the pier. A book . . . an old illustrated book with gilt edges. *The Ghost Lemurs of Madagascar*. Feather . . . a gull diving for garbage . . . the wakes of many ships in many places. A Feather of the Great Bird that lived here once, and the Sacred Lake two days' walk west, where every year a heifer is sacrificed to a Sacred Crocodile. Still the Who? eludes him. He wonders if there are other, similar structures on the island . . .

WHERE?

A loaf of bread . . . water . . . a jar . . . a goose

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tied to a stake. Looking through the eyes of Lizard-who-changes-color from one end of the island to the other. The appalling answer comes back: nowhere, none. Why appalling? He doesn't know yet but he knows.

WHEN?

A reed . . . a loaf of bread . . . a bird wheels in the sky. A woman plucks feathers from a fowl, takes a loaf of bread from an adobe oven. The split between the wild, the timeless, the free, and the tame, the time-bound and binding, the tethered, like the tethered goose of Where? The tethered who will forever resent their bondage.

The structure was built at the one time it could have been built, before the split widened to an impassable chasm.

The concept of a question is reed and water. The question mark fades into reeds and water. The question does not exist.

Strange creatures are fitting stones together. He can't see them clearly, only their hands, like gray ropes. He senses the immense difficulty of an unaccustomed task. The stones are too heavy for their hands and bodies. Yet for some reason they must build this structure.

WHY?

There is no Why. Mission is there. *Look there.*

Ghost stirred beside him, and belched a sweet scent of tamarind fruit. Despite Babuchi's warning, Captain Mission knew he must learn more.

He lit a candle and poured a very large dose of Indris crystals into his hand, and downed them with a cup of water. He remembered the dream gorilla in the basement room, the strange pig creature and then the gentle deer lemur.

Mission lay down by his Ghost. He wasn't sure he wanted to see what the Indris would show him, knowing that what he saw would be sad beyond his endurance. He looked out through tree roots as night sopped up the remaining light, like a vast black sponge.

He lay there in the gray light, his arm around his lemur. The animal snuggled closer and put a paw up to his face. Tiny mouse lemurs stole out of the roots and niches and holes in the ancient tree and frisked around the room, falling on insects with little squeals. Their tails twitched above their heads, their great flaring ears, thin as paper, quivered to every sound as their wide, limpid eyes swept the walls and floors for insects. They have been doing this for millions of years. The twitching tail, the trembling ears mark the passage of centuries. The little squeak of triumph was heard before the birth of Man.

As the light drained into the sponge of night, the room grew ever brighter. He could see for miles in every direction: the coastal rain forests, the mountains and scrub of the interior, the arid southern regions where the lemurs frisk in the tall spiney cactus. They gambol and leap and whisk away into a remote past before the arrival of man on this island, before the appearance of man on earth, before the beginning of time.

An old picture book with gilt-edged lithographs, onion paper over each picture . . . *The Ghost Lemurs of Madagascar* in gold script. Giant ferns and palms, bulbous tamarind trees, vines and bushes. In a corner of the picture is a huge bird, ten fat feet high, a plump, dowdy, helpless bird, obviously flightless, never get *that* off the ground. This bird tells one that here is a time pocket. There

'He could see for miles in every direction: the coastal rain forests, the mountains and scrub of the interior, the arid southern regions where the lemurs frisk in the tall spiney cactus.'

can be no predators in this forest, no large cats. In the middle of the picture is a ring-tailed lemur on a branch looking straight out at the viewer. Now more lemurs appear, like a picture puzzle . . .

The Lemur People are older than Homo Sap, much older. They date back sixty million years to the time when Madagascar split off from the mainland of Africa. They might be called pyschic amphibians, that is, only visible for short periods when they assume a solid form to breathe, but some of them can remain in the invisible state for years at a time. Their way of thinking and feeling is basically different from ours, not oriented towards time and sequence and causality. They find these concepts repugnant and difficult to understand.

One might think that a species that leaves no fossil record is gone forever, but Big Picture, the history of life on earth, is there for anyone to read. Mountain land masses and jungles glide past, some slowing, some accelerating, vast rivers of land on the move or stagnating in wide deltas, whirlpools of land like saws splitting off islands, a great fissure, the land masses rubbing against each other, then splitting, flying apart faster and faster . . . slowing down to the great red island, with its deserts and rain forests, scrub mountains and lakes, its unique animals and plants and the absence of predators or venomous reptiles, a vast sanctuary for the lemurs and for the delicate spirits that breathe through them, the glint in the jewelled eyes of a tree frog.

Above the wild time of Moving Lands, whole continents gliding past each other, gathering silent speed like trains, and any enterprising young man could get a few acres on the move and join up with other folks – going our way? There were accidents aplenty, volcanoes and earthquakes of every magnitude, plugs of molten rock suddenly thrown into the air, and vast steaming sump holes and boiling lakes.

When attached to Africa, Madagascar was the ultimate land mass, sticking out like a disorderly tumor cut by a rift of future contours, a long rift like a vast indentation, like the cleft that divides the human body. The rift is a mile across in places, and in others narrows down to a few hundred feet. It is an area of explosive change and contrast, swept by violent electrical storms, incredibly fertile and yet barren. The first People of the Rift were a race apart, frenzied entrepreneurs.

'These prices is too good to last, folks!'

An ominous tremor shakes the bargaining table.

The People of the Cleft, formulated by chaos and accelerated time, flash through sixty million years to the split. Which side are you on? Too late to change now. Separated by a curtain of fire. Like a vast festive ship launched by fireworks, the great red island moved majestically out to sea, leaving a gaping wound in the earth's side, bleeding lava and spurting noxious gases. It has lain moored in enchanted calm for sixty million years.

Time is a human affliction. Not a human invention but a prison. So what is the meaning of sixty million years without time? And what does time mean to foraging lemurs? No predators here, not much to fear. They have opposing thumbs but do not fashion tools: they have no need for tools. They are untouched by the evil that flows in and fills Homo Sap as he picks up a weapon - now *he* has the advantage. A terrible gloating feeling comes from knowing you've *got it*!

Lemurs don't need it. Six minutes, sixty million years – no difference. Nothing is happening. A feeling of desolation closes round the human essence at the thought. How long have the lemurs paraded before each other in their sad and perfect beauty? How long have the singing gibbons sung their timeless song, as little gibbons clinging to their back attempt to sing too?

Beauty is always doomed. 'The evil and armed draw near.' Homo Sap with his weapons, his time, his insatiable greed and ignorance so hideous it can never see its own face.

'Just let me club down some seal pups, cut an Injun's hands off, burn a Nigra's balls off and watch 'em pop, then we'll all feel a lot better.'

These are unsightly tricks.

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'Whaddaya think this is, a beauty contest?'

A lemur frisks towards the man and he slashes it viciously, leaves it bleeding, sobbing, dying.

'Try and bite me, will you . . . fucking animals!'

Man was born in time. He lives and dies in time. Wherever he goes, he takes time with him and imposes time.

Captain Mission was drifting out faster and faster, caught in a vast undertow of time. 'Out, and under, and out, and out,' a voice repeated in his head . . .

Erase the concept of a question from your mind. The Egyptian glyph is a reed or feather and water. The question dissolves in reeds and water as a poet writes on water. Who? The water the feather the book. Wipe it out with the squawking goose of where and the bread of when, fading into a great, extinct, flightless bird in a swampy pool.

Mission knows the stone temple is the entrance to the biological Garden of Lost Chances. Pay and enter. He feels an impact of sadness that stops his breath, a catching, tearing grief. This grief can kill. He is beginning to learn the coinage here.

He remembers the pink pig creature, lost in passive weakness, slumped hopelessly against the wall, and the black simian against the far wall by the entrance, very still and very black, a blackness that glows. And the gentle deer lemur, extinct for two thousand years, the Ghost that shares his pallet. He moves forward through the roots that trail from the ancient stone arch. Somehow the black monkey creature is in front of him and he looks into his eyes, completely black. He is singing a black song, of a blackness too pure to survive in time. It is only compromise that survives, and that is why Homo Sap is such a muddled, unsightly creature, precariously and hysterically defending a position that he knows is hopelessly compromised.

Mission moves through a black tunnel, opening on a series of dioramas: the last Deer Lemur falls to a hunter's arrow. Passenger pigeons rain from the trees to salvos of gunfire, and plump down on the plates of fat bankers and politicians with their gold watch-chains and gold fillings. They belch out the last passenger pigeon. The last Tasmanian wolf limps through a blue twilight, leg shattered by a hunter's bullet. And the almosts, the might-have-beens, who had one chance in a billion and lost.

Seeing the planet as an organism, it is obvious who the enemies of the planet are. Their name is legend. They dominate and populate the planet. 'The deceived and the deceivers who are themselves decived.' Did Homo Sap think other animals were there just for Him to *eat*? Apparently. Bulldozers are destroying the rain forests, the cowering lemurs and flying foxes, the singing Clos gibbons, who produce the most beautiful and variegated music of any land animal, and the gliding Colugo lemurs, who are helpless on the ground. All going, to make way for more and more devalued human stock, with less and less of the wild spark, the priceless ingredient – energy into matter. A vast mudslide of soulless sludge.

Doom and sadness hangs with the gray mist in these damp cages. It's there in every face and any kid cracks up and starts screaming I CAN'T STAND IT will get slapped by John Wayne. It's Zoo City here. Strange dream animals roam the ghost midways and sideshows. Margaras slinks into the White Cat bar – 'Seen any black cats lately?' – 'Not lately, Whitey, they all got bleached out like you, got the light inside you might say and they lit up with a pure white flame. Wasn't nothing I could do to prevent it.'

Margaras turns up the silvery light, the silvery white light, searing moonlight flooding in shredding flesh to silver film flakes – let go and let it happen, let yourself flake on out flake on out like snow it's all raining down behind you all your past life breaking loose and raining down in chunks of malevolence and joy and fear and the pure killing purpose, little scenes like soap bubbles bursting in air. Whose flag was still where? Everything is fading, falling to pieces behind you as you move and now ahead of you as well – where who are you? Who were you why? It has no reality, it leaves nothing behind save the observer. Observe the observer observed.

* * * *

AS INDRIS can give eyes to see another reality, it can also, in the hands of a skilled sorcerer, impose tunnel vision in his native victims: 'A man appeared and said they were bad people and had to be killed.' While Captain Tew waited at his lonely, distant cove, in the dead of night two huge bands of Malagasy natives swept down upon Libertatia and wiped out the colony. Captain Caraccioli died in this attack, and Mission escaped with only forty-five men and two sloops. In time he found his way to Captain Tew's remote harbor, and the two men decided to retire to America, where they were both unknown. In a great storm off Cape Infantes, Captain Mission's sloop was lost beneath the waves. □

NOW, TODAY, in 1986, the lemurs of Madagascar are threatened with extinction. When humans first arrived on the island 1500 years ago, there were some forty species; now only 22 remain, and all are considered endangered. In some parts of the island the natives hunt the slow lemurs for their meat, although in other places they are protected by a taboo. The population is growing rapidly and may reach 12 million by the year 2000, and the ongoing forestry and slash-and-burn agriculture have destroyed ninety percent of the original forests, the lemurs' natural habitat. It is projected that the lemurs of Madagascar may be gone in a hundred years – the legacy of sixty million years destroyed in our lifetimes.

In an 8300-acre forest near Durham, North Carolina, the Duke University Primate Center maintains a colony of over 600 prosimians, mostly lemurs, some of them in semi-wild natural enclosures. This colony was started at Yale in 1958 and moved to Durham in 1968. When a ruffed lemur gave birth in that year, it was the first birth in captivity anywhere in forty years. More than 300 lemurs have been born at the Primate Center since then. Director Elwyn L. Simons has established good relations with the Malagasy government and was able to bring nine wild-caught sifakas to the Duke compound last year.

The Duke University Primate Center needs financial support from concerned individuals. Write to DUPC, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina 27706.

'The Ghost Lemurs of Madagascar' is a new short story by William S. Burroughs; his most recent British publications are Queer *(Picador) and* The Adding Machine *(Calder).*

SHORT STORY: 2

Nobody likes a refugee

Naomi Mitchison

NOBODY LIKES a refugee. They are a nuisance. They cause trouble. They are frightened and unwashed. They do not speak our language, at least not the way it should be spoken. They smell of over there.

All the same I think we have to help them, though it is good when they can be passed on. I remember very well that time in Lobatsi. Yes. I was much younger then and more afraid of what might happen to my future. It was not so long after Independence and I was still excited about that, as many of us were. I had passed my Cambridge and I had qualified for work in the Ministry of Education. Yes, I was a real Government Service man and it was at last truly our own government, even if there were still many whites in it, one of them my boss. But I had won my interview.

Well, I went over to see my aunt. We are from the Baralong and my aunt was a proud woman. Once she and my uncle, who had died a few years before, had land, a good farm across the border in the Republic. Yes, it had water and they had built a brick house with three rooms, as well as sheds and places for the plow oxen and the hens. She had a garden. How often she spoke of it! But it became a black spot in a white land, so the Boers took it, paying very little for the fields my uncle had cleared and fenced and nothing for the house, since they said that no white would live in it. Yet my aunt had kept it so clean you could lay a blanket down anywhere, and it was well thatched.

People spoke for my uncle, mostly other farmers, even Boers, for my uncle was well known and liked by all. But it was no use except that they let him stay until after the harvest. Then he must harness the oxen to the great waggon with all their things from the house and my aunt threw dust on the last fire she had lit and perhaps she cried and she and her children got themselves onto the waggon and they turned their backs on what was no more their home.

They crossed into Botswana which was then Bechuanaland and they made a farm, although much of it needed to be de-bushed before the next

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Henry Iles

ploughing. The Baralong are good farmers and there were cousins who helped, among them my father. So it was not too bad. But my aunt was always grieving for the old house and the fruit trees she had planted, which had to be left and would be bearing fruit for others. There was less water in the new place, though the grazing was good enough. I used to visit them and meet my cousins. Then my uncle died and my elder cousin who should have done Junior Certificate failed, perhaps because he had been too sorry about his father. Moswetsi, that was his name, and his mother managed the farm well enough, but when I went to visit he sometimes became angry and sad because I had stayed on with education, and he had missed.

My aunt cooked nice food although she always complained that her kitchen was not like the old one. This time I brought her gummy sweets and half a bottle of whisky which I had shared with a friend. Myself, I do not like the taste of whisky, but it is the most expensive, so I liked to put down my own earned money and ask for it, more especially if there were white men at the bar who could see me pay proudly. This whisky I had bought out of only my third pay check. My aunt liked the whisky; it made her able to laugh a little and tell stories. I remember she told me about Plaatje; he had been some kind of a relation, I think. In all her stories the bad people had been the Boer men. This I could believe and I was very glad that new Botswana had shaken them off. Or almost.

Well, the next day was Sunday and we went to the church. I like to sing a few strong hymns, but I do not think they mean much, not to ourselves. My cousin Moswetsi, who was with us, slipped out after the second verse and I could see through the window that he was speaking with someone. His mother also seemed to see this and I could tell that it made her not happy. But that was all for the time. Later in the day Moswetsi and I took a lift into Lobatsi. In those days it was not so grand as it is now, the abbatoir did not look the fine way it looks today and the shops were smaller. But it was more than that. We in Gaborone were lighthearted because of Independence and all our plans and the big Government buildings and the Mall and this feeling we had that everything must go well now and we had all voted, so that now we were a democracy and as good as the big countries. But in Lobatsi people went dodgingly, not looking at one another, nor greeting loudly and with laughter. Not everyone, but enough to make me uneasy. I found myself thinking that this was because it was so near the border with the Republic. I tried to speak of this with Moswetsi, but he shook his head. It seemed to me that, although he barely greeted one or two persons, yet he exchanged looks with a few. I waited for him to speak. ▷

“In all her stories the bad people had been the Boer men. This I could believe and I was very glad that new Botswana had shaken them off. Or almost.”

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He said no, no. Yet I knew inside myself that he was not yet speaking from the heart and perhaps I had made him anxious, so I said we should have a drink and we should go to the Cumberland Hotel. As you know, that is the big place and indeed I thought to myself that perhaps I had been too bold and after all and in spite of Independence we could be treated coldly or even thrown out. But then I thought no. I am a citizen of the new Botswana and I myself am part of the Government, though as yet only a small part.

So we went in to the bar and several white men gave us hard looks and two of them whispered and laughed and I hated them. So I wondered if I should ask for whisky so that I could show that we Batswana could ask for anything and were as good as them. But then I thought that was a show-off and they could laugh at me secretly, so I asked for beers and when we got them another white man looked in a nice way and raised his glass to us. So for a while we sat in a corner and watched.

Then Moswetsi began to seem uneasy and said 'Let us go' and we walked along the road a little way out from Lobatsi and we spoke about the whites and so long as they were not the Boers it was all right.

In a while we saw a white man with a camera and he seemed to be taking photographs, as the tourists from everywhere are always doing, even of the most common things, so this was nothing new. The man walked slowly under the trees with the camera slung over his shoulder. He was wearing a jacket buttoned tight and suddenly it seemed to me that there was no shirt under it. Moswetsi said: 'Come, we will see' and he walked following the white man.

I said 'He is taking many photographs' and Moswetsi said 'Yes, but is there film in his camera?' And I was surprised, but I said to myself that white people sometimes do mad things.

And now we had come a little way out from Lobatsi and I thought we should begin to look for a lift. But Moswetsi was walking quickly and soon he was beside the white man and seemed to speak with him. They moved off the road to where there were some bushes and I asked myself what could my cousin be doing and whether we should stand and sign for a lift, since it had begun to be late and nobody could take photographs even if what Moswetsi had said was just a joke against the whites.

My cousin came and stood beside me. He said: 'The Boers took my mothers' farm. The same Boers would take this man's life.'

'Why?' I said and then I began to understand, so now I whispered 'They are chasing him? The police?'

'We must get him to Francistown' Moswetsi said. 'That will take two days. You must keep him in your room in Gaborone.'

This made me angry. 'No!' I said, 'A big no. I am a Government servant. I am not interested in politics.'

'You will do this for my mother who is your aunt' said Moswetsi, and I did not answer. I wanted to go back to where we were before. I said 'It is time we got our lift.'

'Yes, yes,' said Moswetsi, 'but it is a certain safe lift, not any one. And I shall leave you when we get to my place and you will take him on to Gaborone.'

So we waited and I very much did not want this thing to have happened. Before, I had seen myself on a straight road that might lead to great advantages. And now I would perhaps be breaking some law, for I did not know why the Boers hated this man and he might have murdered one of them and he might have a gun as well as an empty camera. But my cousin said: 'It is good that our Botswana is now an independent country, and we can choose what way to go.'

> ***'Why? I said and then I began to understand, so now I whispered, They are chasing him? The police?'***

So I began to think that after all this was so and we could decide who were our true friends. But still I would be going into trouble. Yet my cousin was so certain that I would do what he asked that I began to accept that the thing must be done. And soon there came a certain truck and Moswetsi stepped into the road and made a sign and it stopped. Then came the man out from the bushes and when the truck started he was sitting between the driver and me. We dropped Moswetsi off and he and the white man shook hands and passed certain words together and then we took the long road to Gaborone. Most of it was a dust road in those days, though it is a fine highway now.

I did not like the man's smell; perhaps he had not washed for too long; and sometimes he made swallowing noises. I talked across him with the driver, who was not from the Baralong but from Mahalapye, up north. He was an educated man but we did not speak in English since we were speaking about the one who sat between us and stared at the road rushing backwards under our lights and now and then there was a small animal or a bird that flashed across.

This driver told me that the South African police were after this man to be a witness in a big trial, saying what they wanted. A white man could be police-hurt just as well as a black and he had been much threatened. We all know well what is done in South African prisons. Now it is the same for the whites, the driver said. Yes, said the driver, all that unless he agrees to witness. And he will not do that.

'Yet he seems not to be a strong man' I said, for he had sagged back, and I saw he had not been able to shave.

'No' said the driver, 'he is not strong. But God might give him strength.'

'He will need that' I said, and I began to pity the man and wondered what was to be done.

The driver said he was taking the man as far as Gaborone. Later, he said, there will be a safe lift to Francistown.

I asked could not the man go by train, but the answer was that many of the train people were still from the Republic and not to be trusted even if now they were our citizens. That is not so today, but in those days the railway was not properly ours. So it seemed I must keep him safe until the next lift came. 'Do not let him go out of your house' he said. 'I will come back perhaps tomorrow. He must not be seen.'

'Must I feed him?' I asked, and the driver said yes.

So it came that I took this man into my room, which was in one of the old houses, and I gave him a blanket and he slept and was still sleeping when I left for the office. It was a difficult day for me. I had many figures to copy and add up or perhaps subtract. In those days we must do all that by hand; now the small computers make it easy. But not then. I went over and over my figures and my boss became impatient. I made a small mistake. Oh, I cursed this refugee man who had made me so anxious.

He slept most of the day and after work I brought sandwiches and made tea. In the dark I took him out to shit. Late that night came a knock on the door. The man was most frightened. But I went and it was my cousin Moswetsi and someone with him whom I did not know, but he had a truck. So this white man whose name I never knew was put onto the truck and we all wished him well, but I was most glad not to see him again. No, he never told me his name and I did not ask.

'That' said my cousin, 'is your share of payment for the farm.' And I knew how he and his mother and even his younger sister had talked for many evenings about their farm and wept for the beautiful days there.

But my boss had found that small mistake in one of my sums and he was very angry and said hard things about my education. And I washed the blanket because it smelled of this man. All he had with him was the empty camera which he could use in pretending to be a tourist, and a little soap and a pair of socks. Even, he had no cigarettes. I never asked him his name. I did not ask, had he a wife, a home, what he did. Better not to know. But he had ink stains on his hands.

Later my cousin told me that this man had got safely to Francistown and the plane that took the refugees away. There was a powerful white man there who saw to it and protected them. But it was many days before my mistake over the adding was forgotten. I am not happy to remember it, even if it is now long ago.

Today I am a married man with an office that is wholly mine and my aunt is no more. Also the refugees who came from South Africa at the time of the terrible trials come no more. We have other kinds of refugees today, from further north, not white. Some are good people, but have lost their homes. They are at Dukwe now. But some among them are not good and are sent from the Boer Republic to make harm.

That is most difficult, for how can we tell which are the true refugees whom we should help, although we hope very much that they can be passed back to their old homes near Bulawayo. Yes, it is hard to know what to do. But it is a most sad thing to be a true refugee with no home, and always, always we must help them since we ourselves now have our own home and our own country. Which is Botswana. □

'Nobody Likes a Refugee' is a new story by Naomi Mitchison, whose breathtaking output of full-length works includes The Conquered (1923), The Corn King and the Spring Queen (1931), The Bull Calves (1947) *and* Solution Three (1977). *Some of her earlier shorter fiction has just been collected in* Beyond this Limit *(Scottish Academic Press).*

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ARTS

Imploding under the pressure of winning a first class Stalin Award? Cherkasov as Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible

TRAILERS

The London Film-Makers' Co-op finishes its 'Visions of the Future' season on Friday 19 and Saturday 20 December with programmes including *The Thing from Another World, It Came from Outer Space* on Friday and Chris Marker's *La Jetée*, Godard's *Alphaville* and the still brilliant (and relevant) *Dr Strangelove* on Saturday. Details from LFMC on 01-586 4806.

CINEMA

Pomp and circumstance

Judith Williamson

Ivan the Terrible Part One and Part Two (The Boyar's Plot)
Everyman, from 26 December

A CHRISTMAS TREAT for anyone interested in cinema must be the re-release (with new 35mm prints) of Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* Parts 1 and 2. Originally released 14 years apart they have rarely been shown together and between them they chart a bizarre history — not only in their own increasingly ornate representation of a powerful populist ruler but, more broadly, of the crisis of representation in Stalin's USSR.

By the Thirties the Stalinist regime's insistence on 'Socialist Realism' — healthy, heroic dramas endorsing the social order of the day — made it increasingly difficult to pursue the kinds of freewheeling formal and conceptual experiments that had characterised film-making in the years after the revolution. Eisenstein was out of favour for a variety of reasons at this time and, in 1937, was prevented from finishing *Bezhin Meadow*: accused by a critical committee of formalism, over-stylisation at the expense of narrative clarity, and abstracting themes rather than particularising. Having submitted to these criticisms he was allowed to direct *Alexander Nevsky* the following year — under the rather humiliating condition of strict supervision by his assistant, whose task was to keep him to a clear narrative line and away from any stylistic experiments.

This single-track historical drama about a popular hero defeating Teutonic invaders met with official approval (though it had to be withdrawn on the signing of the 1939 German-Soviet pact) and Eisenstein was allowed slightly freer rein in directing another big historical drama with the same leading actor, Cherkasov, about the unification of Russia by Ivan the Terrible. Part one, finished in 1944, won Eisenstein, Cherkasov, Tisse (Eisenstein's longstanding cameraman) and Prokofiev (who composed the music) a first class Stalin Award. Part Two, however, appalled Stalin and was not released until 1958 — five years after his death and ten years after Eisenstein's.

This history of *Ivan the Terrible* helps to make sense of the film visually. The story itself offers exactly the kind of grand patriotic drama favoured by Stalin: the opening title declares 'This film is about the man who united Russia in the sixteenth century'. Ivan — in the extraordinary figure of Cherkasov — is presented as a magnetic, majestic personality and, in the first half at least, as a rationalist in the face of superstition, a populist in the face of elitism. Given all this, what is striking is the intense use of imagery which — far from Socialist Realism — gives an eerie, almost expressionist edge to the monolithic saga of Ivan's exploits.

Under order not to stray into conceptual devices like montage, Eisenstein channels stylisation and conceptualisation into forms quite different from those familiar from *Strike, October* and *Battleship Potemkin*. It's as if all expansion on the material becomes flattened into the image itself, giving a frieze-like quality to the *mise-en-scène*. The period and setting provide ample material for formal richness, for example in the memorable opening scene in Part One, Ivan's coronation. Even here there is some scope for Eisenstein's old methods of generalisation: after the opening title calls Ivan the 'First crowned Tsar of all Russia', the first image of the film is a shot, not of Ivan, but of *the crown*: in this one moment Socialist Realism is defied as Eisenstein focuses on the concept of the ruler rather than his person. In the next instant as the crown is placed on Ivan's head, the film begins its uneasy marriage of the specific and the general, the personification of power and its visual conceptualisation.

Eisenstein has always had an eye for the paraphernalia of office — in *October*, the feather beds, classical statues, decorative glassware and cutlery of the Winter Palace — but, denied access to any imagery outside the story itself, his representation of iconic forms becomes almost baroque. An army marching with scythes forms the shape of scythes on the landscape; the line of the people's march from Moscow to beg Ivan to return forms the shape of his profile as he surveys his subjects. In interiors, candles abound and shadows prefigure every entrance; movement becomes balletic, symbolically choreographed, as when Ivan steps repeatedly on the trailing robe of his priest friend, pleading with him to stay.

This visual formality is present in Part One, but its narrative line is straightforward to the point of singlemindedness — Ivan being truly monomaniac. However, in Part Two it is the representation which becomes almost manic — culminating in the near-abstract, swirling colour sequence of the Oprichniks' dance — as if, unable to expand outwards, the imagery implodes. The story of the strong hero seems to crack open — in part from the very pressure to hold together. The character of Ivan becomes more complicated and contradictory, with a sort of Freudian childhood sequence that attempts to offer some explanation of his personality, and the multiplying of angles on his character is matched by the accelerating diversity of camera angles until the imagery seems

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to overtake the story — the stunning red, gold and black dance has no overt narrative function at all.

This insistence on the plane of the image produces some consideration of representation in the political sense as well. Vivid examples of this are the visualisation of the Polish court as a giant chess board at the beginning of Part Two, and the counting of soldiers with coins in Part One. For the film is both a product of, and addresses, a crisis of historical representation — how to portray a powerful, despotic leader — and of visual representation, of how to speak *about* the subject matter through images. Ultimately what is fascinating both inside the film and outside is the way the political restrictions on Eisenstein's earlier visual techniques result in a film at once so rigid and yet so ornate; and then how this convoluted opulence itself functions as an ideological threat to the narrative message, which led to the film being banned. In watching both parts today we can trace the bizarre tension between the single view of the dictator — both Ivan and Stalin — and its splintering in the strangely frozen, fragmented film, Eisenstein's last and never completed. □

ART

Outside in

John Spurling

Bryan Kneale
Henry Moore Gallery, Royal College of Art, Kensington Gore, London SW7
David Smith
Whitechapel

THE LAST SUBSTANTIAL show of David Smith's sculpture in London was his Memorial exhibition at the Tate in 1966. Earlier the same year a 36-year-old Manxman, Bryan Kneale, who had only recently abandoned painting for sculpture, had a retrospective at the Whitechapel. In the 20 years since then, Smith has been recognised — in his native America and in this country, if not so much in the rest of Europe — as one of the outstanding sculptors of the century, while Kneale has become Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy Schools and Head of the Sculpture Department at the Royal College of Art.

For all his success as a teacher, though — perhaps even because of it and because of his early decision to join the RA, when other leading British artists of the Sixties were regarding it as true Protestants regard the Church of Rome — Kneale has never been rated more than moderately as an artist and is virtually unknown abroad or outside professional art circles here.

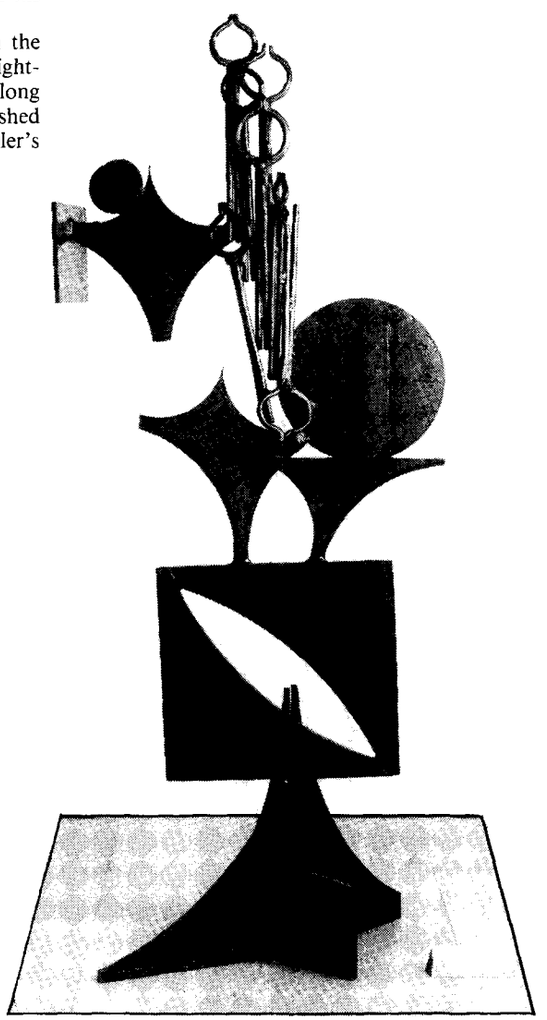
Yet now that chance has again brought Smith and Kneale together in London — reversing their geographical locations, so that Smith has moved east to the Whitechapel and Kneale west to the Royal College of Art — Kneale loses nothing by the comparison, indeed his is in many ways the more surprising and stirring display. No doubt their respective venues have something to do with this. The Whitechapel's refurbished galleries have been open for a while now, whereas Kneale is inaugurating the RCA's sparkling new Henry Moore gallery, a white-floored and white-pillared rectangle with glass on both long sides, looking southwards on to an inner courtyard and northwards to Kensington Gardens and the Albert Memorial — a central area through which people pass on their way about the College. Furthermore, Smith's constructions were mostly intended to be placed out of doors and look a bit cramped and awkward in the Whitechapel, like a team of footballers in a drawing-room, whereas Kneale's exhibition, organised by himself, is a near-perfect match of space and objects. But the main reason for Kneale's triumph has nothing to do with odious comparisons. It is simply that, while Smith is already an accepted master, much written about and illustrated, even admirers of Kneale's work have never had the opportunity before to see quite how strong and inventive it is.

Nine years ago the catalogue introduction to a show of his small sculptures compared his 'fierce, almost destructive urge to scrutinise, test and penetrate first principles' with the same exploratory force in Stubbs' anatomical drawings and, curiously enough, Kneale's most recent work has been a series of large, coloured conté drawings of animal, bird, fish and reptile skeletons from the Natural History Museum. Hanging round the walls of the new gallery their relation to his sculpture is almost that of a commentary, emphasising the triple elements of the organic, the mechanical and the quirky which make all his pieces so delicately organised and lively.

Their size varies considerably, but even the largest constructions, such as the elegant eight-foot-high steel 'Athene' or the 12-foot-long 'Canal' (a series of falling levels of burnished aluminium), have the same sense of jeweller's precision and domestic scale as the small wall- or table-pieces. Monumentality has no place in Kneale's art. His drawings of a polar bear or a gorilla show balanced working mechanisms of the same order as those of frogs or fish. On the other hand, each piece, like each animal skeleton, has a powerful, individual presence, not as if they were living creatures, but as totems or emblems, pared-down, abstracted versions of life, with a distinctly primitive set of references: crushed helmets, burial mounds, shields, ploughshares, Celtic spirals and mummified, Beckettian human heads.

Then again, in spite of such references, there is nothing rugged or portentously mythological about them. Modern materials such as steel and aluminium and more ancient ones like iron and bronze are equally transformed by Kneale's meticulous craftsmanship — his joinings, stretchings, settings at angles, balancings and poisings — into a kind of frozen event or performance; as if, while your back was turned, the totem abstracted from life might at any moment return to life, by sliding, pirouetting, cocking a snook or even — suddenly recovering its organic origin — growing.

After such a strange, sly world of hard materials that constantly suggest softness and flexibility — in just the same way the creatures in the bone drawings seem hardly to miss their outer coverings of flesh, fur, feathers, scales — David Smith's



A painter's sculpture: 'Voltri Bolton IX' by David Smith

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work at first appears exaggeratedly broad-shouldered and foursquare, almost clumsily so. Of course, the large pieces in the Whitechapel's main gallery were not only intended to frame and be framed by a real landscape, they were conceived as objects with distinct front, back and sides and often worked out flat on the floor before being welded together and stood upright. One can hardly complain of being shown too much of Smith's work, when such an exhibition is so long overdue, but two or three of these big later pieces would have been enough to inhabit the gallery instead of the ten or so that are there. The eight-and-a-half-foot-high 'Candida', a collage of flat stainless steel sheets whose scratched, shimmering surfaces create a mesmeric effect of layered reflections, has an alcove to itself and demonstrates how much the other pieces would gain from the same isolation.

Upstairs is another matter. The smaller pieces crowd together better and many of them, such as the riotous orrery 'Star Cage', or the magically rippling 'Hudson River Landscape' (made of welded steel), need only a wall or screen behind them to catch and hold the viewer in their complex rhythms. Smith, like Kneale, began as a painter but, unlike him, essentially remained one: a painter who carried his art to the *plein air* rather than away from it. □

MUSIC

MOR or less

Simon Reynolds

1986 WAS A YEAR in which punk was mourned, loudly, as something betrayed, irretrievably lost. Or it was ignored, *ostentatiously*, as something that had never really mattered in the first place, let alone in '86. Others, meanwhile, waited with baited breath for an equivalent commotion to arrive, for a punctual fulfilment of the decade-cycle theory of rock rupture.

The truth of 1986 lay somewhere else altogether. Far from being unimportant, the events of 1976/77 still structure the music scene. 'Serious rock', the world of the music press and late night radio, is still organised and divided around arguments that originate in punk. Arguments about the value, meaning and use of pop, about the power of music. About what punk *was* exactly. For punk's 'unity' was in fact a rhetorical mirage, a glorious fluke.

Dave Laing's opposition in his book *One-Chord Wonders* between the *spirit* and the *substance* of punk is useful here. One version of punk sees it as a combative dose of realism, invading the pop realm of fantasy and trivia. Punk as a strict response to mid-Seventies rock's dereliction of responsibility. The ultimate destination of this line of thought is Red Wedge (or perhaps The Redskins and their link-up with the SWP). So the last decade has seen a key figure like Paul Weller move from the righteous denunciation of The Jam to his Style Council notion of subversion through affirmation.

Red Wedge 'soul-cialism' stems from a belief that one of the lessons of punk is that Rock Is Dead, spiritually bankrupt, invalid as a basis for protest. Most of these groups now disown punk, seeing it as, at best, a false start; at worst, wholly unconstructive. But beneath the soul finery of groups like The Fine Young Cannibals lies the dour, dowdy spirit of New Wave documentary realism. Soul idiom is commandeered just a little too patly for political purposes — in the Redskins' 'Burn It Down', The Fine Young Cannibals' 'Blue', Simply Red's 'Jericho', The Communards' transformation of 'Loverman' into a gay anthem. The problem with 'soul-cialism' is that the very energies of black pop—narcissism, showiness, upward aspiration — are tamed and stifled by political decency.

1986 also saw an attempt to resurrect the substance of punk — noisy guitar primitivism — and marshal it into a 'movement'. The 'shambling bands' have widely diverging influences — ranging from Sixties garage and psychedelia to the Velvet Underground to the thrash-pop of The Buzzcocks and Ramones to spiky indiepop circa 1979. But there *is* a common legacy derived from punk — a hatred of anything hippy (long tracks, virtuosity, complex instrumentation, mysticism, pomp, fusion). This anti-hippie consensus has itself settled over the decade, ossifying into stifling orthodoxy — an insistence on short songs, lo-fi, minimalism, purism and guitars, guitars, guitars.

New indiepop also offers 'realism' — not Red Wedge social realism, but a truth of adolescence as a period of maladjustment, misery and introversion, as against the fun, fun, fun images of youth presented by pop TV and advertising. A hardcore of indie groups like Talulah Gosh, BMX Bandits, The Pastels, go further still and celebrate childhood innocence and romance — an instinctive revolt against the sophistication and adult sexuality that dominates chartpop.

Soul-cialist pop and indiepop believe in authenticity, which in turn leads them to search out and resurrect a 'pure' or 'real' pop. What they lose in the attempt is an awareness that pop's power lies in its unrealism, its impractical, impossible demands (for action and ecstasy).

Is there anything in 1986 that carries through the utopianism of punk? The Smiths are generally represented in the drab language of authenticity. But what binds Morrissey with his fans is not a relation of simple identification — few can claim to be living a life as freakishly miserable as Morrissey's adolescence. No, Morrissey elevates failure and despair into a grand drama of martyrdom that actually exerts a powerful romantic attraction to his fans. We find an echo of our own lesser miseries. But Morrissey refuses satisfaction. The Smiths propose adolesence, its miseries and its dreams, as a way of life.

And then there's hip hop, which has been touted as the 'black punk' but always in the wrong terms — as a raw blast of protest born of ghetto stress and strife. If hip hop does resemble punk it's less in terms of Sham 69 and more a case of being animated by the same nihilism/megalomania that inhabited Rotten and his prototypes Iggy Pop, Alice Cooper and Jagger. Forget all the liberal tokenist blather — hip hop is basically about *criminality* as a means to absolute possibility. The best hip hop, like the best punk, is EVIL, beyond the pale, an unmanageable form of cultural terrorism. The music is the purest metaphor for violence.

Two singles to sum up '86. The Smiths' 'Panic' — a sour reminder to soulboy critics that the music press readership remains a *rock* audience. This hysterical fantasy of revenge by the disenfranchised, with its chorus of 'burn down the disco/hang the blessed DJ', provoked a furore and became an anthem. And Run DMC's 'Walk This Way'. Black youth is gravitating, quite naturally, towards the most banished and reviled regions of rock memory — rediscovering the renegade power of Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, AC-DC, acid-rock. Run DMC don't so much use Aerosmith's song as substitute it wholesale for anything they might have written themselves. Another bitter blow to the soulboy arbiters of good taste, who thought they'd buried the powerchord for all time.

For all this, pop 1986 was actually dominated by a vile middlebrow consensus, the adult-oriented pop and pseudo-soul of The Communards, Simply Red, Peter Gabriel, etc. But with noisy indie groups signing to majors and hip hop already getting hits maybe 1987 will see the return of ROCK. Maybe the teenage tearaway will be revived as a role model. Maybe adolescence will be reinstalled as a permanent choice. □

DESIGN

Stitch in time

Jules Lubbock

Knitting and the Industrial Revolution; silver knickers and community planning: one thing leads to another

WHAT POLITICIAN would prefer to be known as the knitter rather than the architect of the nation? The very word knitting is ambivalent. Broken bones may knit together, but the textile arts as a whole — witness weaving and embroidery — supply us with terms of misogynist abuse, characterising all that is undirected, trite, ephemeral and treacherous in society.

In her fine exhibition and catalogue essay **Knitting: A Common Art** (Crafts Council till 11 Jan., then Gateshead and York) June Freeman revalues the art but not the concept. We are told (which I did not know) that this sole survivor of domestic textile manufacture (half the women of Britain are knitters) is also the youngest, barely 1,000 years old. We are also told that it was mechanised by Rev. William Lee's invention of the stocking knitting machine in 1589 — but we are not told that Elizabeth I prohibited its use for fear of unemployment, nor that it was the first modern textile machine, nor that in the 18th century the profits of Jedediah Strutt's improved version financed Arkwright's machine for spinning cotton thread by rollers. Hence knitting hatched the Industrial Revolution.

June Freeman cultivates a small-scale, crafty, feminist view of knitting; she inveighs against fashion change and teaches us that even the design of hand-frame knitware was far from mechanical. Her selection of garments opened my eyes to the possibility that a pullover can be as beautiful as an oriental rug, but surely she defeats her own purpose by ignoring the truly momentous

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developments of the 'common art'. Arkwright and Strutt were indeed the knitters of the modern world, a world 'founded upon Cloth'.

In total contrast are the sophisticated patterns of **Georgina von Etzdorf,** a new firm founded by three graduates of the fine art (architects of the nation please note: *fine* art) course in Camberwell. Many of these exquisite patterns are based on drawings of plants and are printed in deep colours on voluptuous materials. At their shop in the Burlington Arcade huge silk scarves go for £75 (wait for the sales), there are waistcoats for the male peacock and silk boxer briefs appropriately decorated with cocks' crests on a scarlet ground. Incidentally, even at Camden Market, where clowntime survives at affordable prices, boxer briefs are selling faster than cubist-collage waistcoats, and socialists may prefer the scarlet ones in cotton with a hammer and sickle motif for £4.99.

Men's fashion has gone underground. When I chaired a lecture at the RIBA given by **Nigel Coates,** whose work I wrote about recently, I found him and his two partners seated round a table dressed in black from top to toe and almost mistook them for a firm of undertakers (though I have no idea, of course, what they were wearing underneath). The lecture, showing his exuberant surrealist rococco work for Tokyo, was packed with young students, unusually for the RIBA, and seemed a portent of Dr Rod Hackney's victory as President a week later. One of Hackney's first acts should be to get people like Coates to decorate the morgue-like RIBA building for his inauguration, symbolising the overthrow of the modernist mafiosi.

This column can claim some for the victory since it was the Prince of Wales' carbuncle speech in 1984, a third of it strung together with quotations from my articles on community architecture (sadly unacknowleged, but nice to know that the *Statesman* is read in Kensington Palace) which first named Hackney among other community architects and brought them to the public's attention. But only **Hackney** had the drive and the vision to see the opportunity for what it was. He promises to fight the cuts in architectural education shamefully promoted by the outgoing quislings of the RIBA and to promote community-based inner city regeneration. I wish him well, but hope that he will use his office to unite rather than divide the different wings of the community movement. It was shocking that Shelter, whose SNAP project in Liverpool in 1969 was the foundation of Coop Housing in that city, and Weller Streets Coop as well, should have withdrawn from Hackney's recent Building Communities conference. I also hope he will support the *New Statesman* campaign to reintroduce absolute height limits on buildings and abolish Plot Ratios in the business zone which has a major bearing upon protecting inner London Boroughs from predatory developers.

Talking of Hackney: ever since he publicly claimed the title of 'Architectural Adviser to HRH' it has been impossible to attend any architectural symposium without some bore laying claim to 'conversations', of some kind, with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales (fanfare). It's all a bit naff. The latest to do so was my favourite property developer, Mr Godfrey Bradman (God to his friends) of the Broadgate scheme next to Liverpool St, who plans to move the market out of **Spitalfields** and turn the ten-acre site into a Roman style forum with a balanced mix of offices, shops and housing planned by Mr Leon Krier, the author of an apology for the architecture of Albert Speer.

With the real dirt of the real market cleaned up, the very heart of the old East End will go the way of Covent Garden. Soon there will be no 'undesirable' areas of inner London left, nowhere with low rents where working-class and immigrant work can flourish. Nowhere like Petticoat Lane or Camden Lock where ex-art students and second-hand dealers can sell cheaply in a true market economy of street-cred fashion and design upon which the work of Coates and his chums is based and for which Britain has an international reputation. □

TELEVISION

Jewel and the clowns

Hugo Williams

CONTRADICTORY OPINIONS on the future of India's **Anglo-Indians** (C4) were reminiscent of differences of opinion heard nearer at home on the subject of the unemployed, as well as of our own racial minorities. For instance, how lousy does an opportunity have to be before it is no longer an opportunity? How desperate is desperate? Words like black economy, emigration, discrimination, drink, drugs, suicide and prostitution were naturally part of the discussion.

Frank Anthony MP, President-in-Chief of the All India Anglo-Indian Association, a good-looking old boy in Edenesque subfusc, was proud to have supported Mrs Gandhi's Emergency and was apparently offered the Vice-Presidency by her, which he turned down. What sort of chances did Anglo-Indians have in the sub-continent today? 'Right to the top,' said Anthony. 'In the fields of aviation, sport and forestry, Anglo-Indians . . . I myself was offered the Punjab in 1967, but I declined.' Was he being deliberately obtuse? We heard how in the old days Anglo-Indians did not have to study because they were automatically employed by the railway, which provided large houses in convenient compounds. A senior driver would have a gardener, two indoor servants and a cook. Was this the world Anthony was referring to? The fate of retired Anglo-Indian railwaymen today, living in unserviced slums like the one outside beautiful Bangalore, seemed less rosy. 'The Anglo-Indian Association promises everything and does nothing,' said a woman social worker. 'Since the support of the British was withdrawn, the Anglo-Indians have been rejected. In a family situation, the man is the weaker partner. This makes him feel worthless and he goes off into drugs and alcohol. He comes home to a house full of seven or eight children because the Catholic community is very powerful, then what can he do but go off to the alcohol shop and put his wife on the street? He's got to eat.' You had to agree with her.

We saw some of these individuals, who at best have the reputation of being happy-go-lucky pleasure-seekers, but the highly articulate cabaret-boy from Bombay had long ago given up this pretence: 'I was very young when I met a cabaret dancer and trained to be a male prostitute. I went with my cousin, who committed suicide. The Christian people won't help, they say go to one of your clients — let them help you. I'm so fed up with being raped and rolled in the gutter I may end up committing suicide.' Younger men are trying to get their hands on the leadership of the Anglo-Indian Association, but in the meantime emigration to Britain seems to be the dream that keeps these forgotten people going.

For a closer look at Bombay's dens of rape and suicide mentioned above, I checked **India Cabaret** (C4) which needed no jaundiced eye to get a perfectly jaundiced picture of pneumatic humanity crawling on its spare tyre to money in the shape of small-time, lecherous, fat businessmen, who tell their wives: 'I go to Cabaret because I go to Cabaret because that's just the way life is.' The blow-up slinky pseudo-nautch-girls probably undress for them, but not for us thankfully. (Hypocrite!) 'Black is black, I want my baby back . . .' went the tape as they sparkled and twinkled like Christmas trees about to shed their needles. 'In home I never look a man in the eye, but at Cabaret I am number one wicked.' Obviously someone somewhere, perhaps me, was thoroughly aroused by this wickedness, but I could have done with a little less writhing and a little more of their weird home life.

An excellent new series about an Anglo-Indian of the kind who belongs to India by circumstance and affection rather than necessity and blood, is **Man-Eaters of Kumaon** (BBC2), a dramatised documentary based on the memoirs of the great white hunter Jim Corbett. But this is no track and slaughter show. It is more of a period wildlife programme. Jim is both anachronism and prophet. In post-WWI India he feels out of place with the brash new district commissioners coming out; unlike them he understands the jungle and can foresee the extinction of the tiger, caused by government-policy deforestation. His family has lived in India for four generations and he talks, according to the pukka-Sahibs, 'A bit chee-chee' (i.e. like an Indian). He is one of them, yet apart.

The first of the series concerned the planning and execution of a tiger-shoot for the new provincial governor. Jim remembers an earlier shoot, 'a massacre really, with everyone sitting up safely on the back of his elephant. Half the time the animals are only wounded.' The shoot is wonderfully realistic, inter-cut with black and white home movies apparently shot by Corbett himself, who is then seen showing his film to schoolchildren and making animal noises for them. Effort has gone on atmosphere rather than the more usual caricature. When the time comes for the Corbetts to go down to their bungalow for the cold season, the life of the village owned and cared for by Jim reminded me of some of the scenes in Satyajit Ray's luminous first film about Indian village life, *Pather Panchali*.

To complete my Indian education, I submitted to **Sholay** (C4), a curry-western in the Butch and Sundance mould. Our full-faced heroes in denim and leather come up against marauding Cossack-types on horseback in their efforts to hunt down a notorious bandit. Raindrops never fall on their heads, but 'We prefer death to ending this friendship' they sing from a motorcycle and sidecar. Very entertaining. □

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WORK IN PROGRESS

Adventures in space

Naseem Khan

IT WAS PANDEMONIUM last Tuesday at the Hackney Empire. Backstage a volunteer army ran busily hither and thither. Bells rang, phones shrilled, doors banged, tempers rose and fell. In short, a pretty normal evening for the grand re-opening of a grand old theatre.

The Hackney Empire is an extraordinary building. Eighty-five years old that very night, it is one of those epic, grandiloquent places that spelt 'Entertainment' 85 years ago. Sweeping staircases, red and gilt: it was the home of variety. Marie Lloyd, Vesta Tilley, Louis Armstrong and Gracie Fields have all played on its stage. But, when television started to bite, it sank to being first a TV recording studio, then a bingo hall. If was from this last grim fate that Roland Muldoon's Cartoon Archetypal Slogan Theatre (CAST) and the new Hackney Preservation Trust got the go-ahead to rescue the place, a mere five weeks ago.

That the doors opened at all is the first marvel. Five weeks is a ludicrously short time to get a theatre going — superstructures removed, pipes lagged, permissions gained, plumbing overhauled, programming established, publicity done — even with the management's eager crowd of local volunteers. The second marvel is the auditorium itself. The Hackney Empire is one of those great, cavernous theatres that appear to have never-ending levels going up and up into the semi-gloom: stalls and circle, upper circle and gods; a thousant seats (including boxes) peering down over the large stage. There's a distinct sense of magic still. Lights glint fitfully on encrusted detail — golden swathes of laurel, garlands, angels — and on the old, pale, ruched curtain still looped up high above the stage.

It was a full house on Tuesday night, with crowds jostling outside for a gala evening packed with denizens of the cabaret circuit — Jenny Le Coat and Ra Ra Zoo, Benjamin Zephaniah and Skint Video, Morris Minor and the Majors, Kevin McAleer, Happy End. The Hackney Empire is, effectively, an extension of CAST and its New Variety circuit: a regular circle of seven London venues which together pull in 1,200 spectators each weekend.

But that, cynics would say, is light years away from a thousand-seater monster in the East End. How can it possibly work? No one, last Tuesday, was saying much about the future and its programming, beyond the current Christmas season. There *will* be a series of one-off, mixed-entertainment evenings, said the administrator Ann Cartwright, of which many would be outside hirings and promotions. Local societies and community groups would also be welcomed. But, with only a starter grant of £2,000 from Greater London Arts, the building will have to pay its way. Still, ironically, this is easier with bigger spaces than with smaller ones: the management could be right to be sanguine about its chances.

It was hard, however, from the upper circle, not to be struck by a sense of paradox. The Hackney Empire, built by Frank Matcham in 1901, comes out of a distant tradition: a tradition of size and boastfulness, imperial qualities that need equal boastfulness and sureness in the acts on stage. But the acts of today, of the cabaret circuit, are not of that sort. They are minor-key, ironic, self-deprecating stuff, mostly dressed down (in the current baggy, dark, shapeless gear) instead of up. Even Ra Ra Zoo's delightful plate-spinning routine (performed in solemnly bizarre costume) plays with the idea of constant failure and takes smashes in its stride. Acts like Kevin McAleer's video lecture — wonderfully lunatic in the intimate Midland Group space — get lost in such as pompous arena, with its implicit expectations.

Some turns did manage the leap from pub to Empire. Zephaniah relished it, bounding round the stage, bouncing cheerfully to the beat of his poems. Jenny Le Coat — dramatic in cocktail black — dominated by the sheer, crisp, intelligent quality of her material and delivery. But the paradox remains: a heroic building inhabited by work in a determinedly anti-heroic mode. How will the Hackney Empire come to terms with this?

Down the road at tiny Chat's Palace — a clear case of chalk and cheese — there's a solution to a very different problem of space. Chat's have kicked out the old distinctions between audience and performer: there's nothing like a stage, or rows of seats. The annual Chat's Christmas show (devised, as regular readers will know, collectively) takes place before, behind, above and around the audience — which is welcomed (indeed, is structured) inside the evening's entertainment. The entire hall is the set — in this case, a decaying, post-apocalyptic junkyard full of pipes and ducts and steam — a flexibility that makes for a far more integrated and democratic evening than the traditional theatre lay-out. *Apocalympics*, the current Christmas show, brings the centre, after a naff year, nearly back on form. The story is a sturdy one — the survivors of the holocaust (including the audience) compete for the prize of a seat on a spaceship away from Earth, until the arrival of the awful Yummies (Young Upwardly Mobile Mutants) unites everyone — and it's put over well by local people of very different abilities. Musically, however, it lacks the strong thread that shows have had in previous years, and the subtlety of 1984's show.

But, for all its failings, a Chat's show with its closeness, immediacy and accessibility is always something special. They are qualities that the infinitely grander Hackney Empire will have to fight, against its own architecture, to find. □

Work in Progress will be on holiday for the next issue; in the second January issue it will be having a meal with magicians.

THEATRE

Parent company

Victoria Radin

The Mother
BERTOLT BRECHT *Cottesloe*
King Lear
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Olivier*
Bijers Sunbird
ROBERT KIRBY *Lyric Studio, Hammersmith*

TWO NEW PRODUCTIONS opened at the National Theatre last week. One is very bad and very big; the other is very fine and very small. But that is not the only moral. The very fine work — on its own terms, magnificent — is Di Trevis' staging of Brecht's **The Mother**, a cheapo educational touring production using only intelligence and a handful of nothing for its set, which comes to its end at the Cottesloe on Saturday but may be revived thereafter.

I am never exactly a Brecht fan, but this view of the last of his Berlin didactic plays, which he said were 'meant to teach the tactics of class war' and to be performed on the hoof in non-theatrical auditoria, greatly surprised me. It suggests that, like Freud, Brecht has been misconstrued in this country: taken too baldly and coldly at his word. The word in this case is usually translated as alienation: but this production shows us that the character of distanciation — a better term — need not be dry and hostile. Trevis' staging of this clear but certainly austere play is detached without being deadened, affectionate without patronising its characters or spectators, warm but not sentimental. It is also clearly thought-out; good to listen to (Eisler's songs, done simply to a piano accompaniment) and extremely beautiful to look at.

This is Trevis' first work in her new post as head of a company at the NT (two in-house works for the Lyttelton and the Cottesloe respectively are to come) and it shows an assured intelligence applied to the needs of a text. The story of the instinctive politicisation of a woman in pre-Revolutionary Russia through the activities of her son, it was first produced shortly after the miners' strike in Manchester, in another version by Trevis which projected footage of the strike and its female supporters. Now, in Bunny Christie's set, the back of the stage is hung only with white sheets on a clothesline; another clothesline at the front enables the actors to pull across sheets roughly printed with the play's subtitles. The actors take across the play's main title, go to rows of chairs on either stage of the stage, quickly to add the Russian touches to their costumes, and the play begins.

Brecht's work was written with pleasing logic. Vlasova's sense of injustice is activated when her son and his colleagues are bullied by police who also trash her flat. To save one of their comrades, she offers to distribute the illegal strike leaflets her illiteracy prevents her from understanding; thrust into a debate on the pros and cons of striking (the issues, it seems, are eternal) she comes to believe that 'communism is for people like us', the poor. She organises reading lessons for her comrades and raises the consciousness even of the pious

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neighbours who come to prey on her as she mourns her son's death. The play spans some 20 years during which the Mother is transformed from an appendage to her men — in her own words, 'a worker's widow and a worker's mother' — to a sort of revolutionary saint, but Brecht tells it with humour and we never forget that her political cunning is the same as the cunning taught by poverty.

Yvonne Bryceland gives us great depth of feeling behind emotional restraint: a wily philosopher, above all a survivor, like Mother Courage. Colin McCormack, as the wet liberal schoolteacher who learns from his tutee, Geoffrey Freshwater as a comic butcher and Ronan Vibert as the son have the more defined roles in a cast which gives every impression of a company.

These are not the best times in which to watch a play about simple revolutionary ardour, but my initial cynicism crumbled before the production's modest way with dogma. The police are not villains; the illiterate workers have nothing of the pub-agit-prop coarseness we've come to expect; and we're continually reminded that Vlasova's revolutionary fervour sacrifices one of her principal functions —that of being a mother to her son.

Over in the big top of the Olivier Theatre, David Hare marks his directorial debut of a classical play with a **King Lear** that has been variously described as Brechtian, Brookian, Beckettian — but never Shakespearean (if by that is meant some evidence of having really listened to the text and taken a personal approach). Following on the Brook production of 1962, Hare seems to posit the notion that Lear was a pretty terrible guy anyway — 'this old bugger' in the reported words of Anthony Hopkins, who plays him with some of the mannerisms of his Lambert Le Roux and no sense of age or distinction and little of madness or change. Goneril and Regan are nice girls to begin with who quite rightly, apparently, feel put upon by their father's insistence on the trappings of grandeur after he has acceded his reign: but where, then, in a stage often crammed with immobile, dead-wood extras, are the signs of his hundred retainers? Of a cast which includes many fine actors thrown away, and some truly bad performances, only Michael Bryant's gentle Gloucester takes a discernible and human line on his character — though he must suffer a putting out of eyes which left one of the audience crumpled at the back of the stalls in a faint. There seems little attempt to make us mourn but many to make us suffer: human and animal carcasses descend from the flies while, below, ranks of players in vile costumes stand stiffly delivering lines in positions of geographical remoteness which belie the play's concern with the connections that bind us to one another. The overwhelming effect is of impoverishment within great resources — dry bread and water perversely served up at the banqueting table.

No meal at all at the Lyric Hammersmith, where I allowed representatives of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, who claimed that the white anti-apartheid South African import inside was a 'flagrant breach of the UN cultural boycott,' to turn me away from **Bijers Sunbird** at the door. They also said that no one from the Lyric had tried at any point to talk to them. Thus both sides, who are really the same side, create a fruitless silence. □

Books

MUSIC

Stars and bars

Andrew Clements

The New Grove Dictionary of American Music
ed. H. WILEY HITCHCOCK & STANLEY SADIE
Macmillan (four volumes) £395

NATIONAL ENCYCLOPEDIAS of music can be uncomfortable things, full of historical loose ends and almost always tinged with jingoism. But a dictionary of American music jars less than most; for the very reasons that would make a similar treatment of the British scene unthinkable, *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music* presents a marvellously varied and stimulating portrait of a nation's assorted musics, superbly packaged at a stratospheric price. Everyone is here, from Elliott Carter to Country Joe and the Fish, John Philip Sousa to Cecil Taylor; far from just abstracting the Americana from the original *New Grove* dictionary, much of the material has been rewritten and the rock, jazz and country music entries vastly expanded.

The title, though, is slightly misleading: it is really concerned only with the United States, and Canadian music is largely excluded. On that basis there's no entry for the pianist Glenn Gould, nor the composer Claude Vivier, though the Canadian-born Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen and Neil Young do get in, because they made their careers predominantly in the USA. On the same principle there are entries for Bartok, Hindemith, Schoenberg and Rakhmaninov, all of whom spent the last years of their lives there.

It's not at all a new idea to treat the whole spectrum of American music as a coherent entity. In his *Music in a Newfound Land*, more than 20 years ago, Wilfrid Mellers brought together jazz and 'serious' composers, as well as the musical theatre of Blitzstein and Bernstein, while more recently both Charles Hamm and John Rockwell have pushed rock and country into the fold as well. The treatment works for the USA in a way it could never do for British music, for social and political reasons: the class structures that segment and hermetically seal off the audiences for each musical form in Europe appear to operate (when they operate at all) far less strongly across the Atlantic. There are no pressing musical reasons to consider Milton Babbitt and Bruce Springsteen together, any more than there would be to combine, say, Michael Tippett and Elvis Costello here, except that in the USA they seem more obviously manifestations of a single cultural environment, which may have developed in many total separate directions but has never altogether lost its sense of being American.

The idea of American serious music as being typified by the wide open spaces of Aaron Copland's populist film scores and ballets is of course a very narrow one, but, like many such clichés, it has a substantial grain of truth buried within it. Copland's tuneful, approachable work dates from a period in the Thirties when American music closed ranks as never before or since; when, under the impulse of Roosevelt's New Deal and the Works Progress Administration in particular, composers were funded to take their art to the people. From that focal point the styles began to fly apart and have been diverging ever since. But perhaps it was that populist Big Bang in the Thirties that gave coherence to such a wide range of composers and imprinted upon even the most esoteric of them a sense of the larger American musical scene, so that it comes as less of a surprise to discover a jazz rhythm buried away in Carter's Cello Sonata, or that Stephen Sondheim once studied with Babbitt.

Where 20th-century British composers have tried periodically to find their roots in folk music, their transatlantic counterparts have looked to jazz rather than indigenous musical cultures. One of the fascinating and moving aspects of *Grove America* is the body of articles devoted to the native American tribes, to the widely differing styles of their rituals and songs, and it's surprising not to find that wealth of material deployed in other contexts. Perhaps the sense of guilt over the extinction of much of that culture is still too overpowering.

Such ethnomusicology constitutes a much smaller proportion of these volumes than it did of the parent set; if there is a criticism to be made of the entries here it is that many of the shorter references to minor performers and composers are routine recitations of career facts which could have been found in any yearbook or professional directory and hardly constitute readable prose. The standard of writing in the more substantial entries is variable too; to generalise, the writers on rock are the most discursive, those on serious composers the most disciplined. It makes many of the rock entries highly readable, particularly when the writers are happy to allow their own prejudices a free rein, but it results in some strange portionings of space, so that a rock also-ran like Todd Rundgren receives a good deal more attention in column inches than a classical pianist of gigantic stature like Rudolf Serkin. Some of the major articles become valuable additions to the literature in their right — the entry on Milton Babbitt constitutes the best introduction to his compositional techniques I have encountered, while those on Carter, Gershwin, Bernstein and Glass are substantial essays on significant figures in the history of 20th-century music.

Some pieces have been taken over from *New Grove* virtually intact — the damning dismissal of Horowitz by Michael Steinberg has happily been allowed to stand: 'Horowitz illustrates that an astounding instrumental gift carries no guarantee of musical understanding.' But such moments of savagery are rare and the general tone is suave and mildly enthusiastic.

Such a pricey set is obviously aimed at the American academic market, but I hope copies will find their way into British reference collections too. No nation's music has been so comprehensively catalogued and dissected before, nor presented in such a compulsively readable way — I can't remember a music book to which I will return for pleasure more often. □

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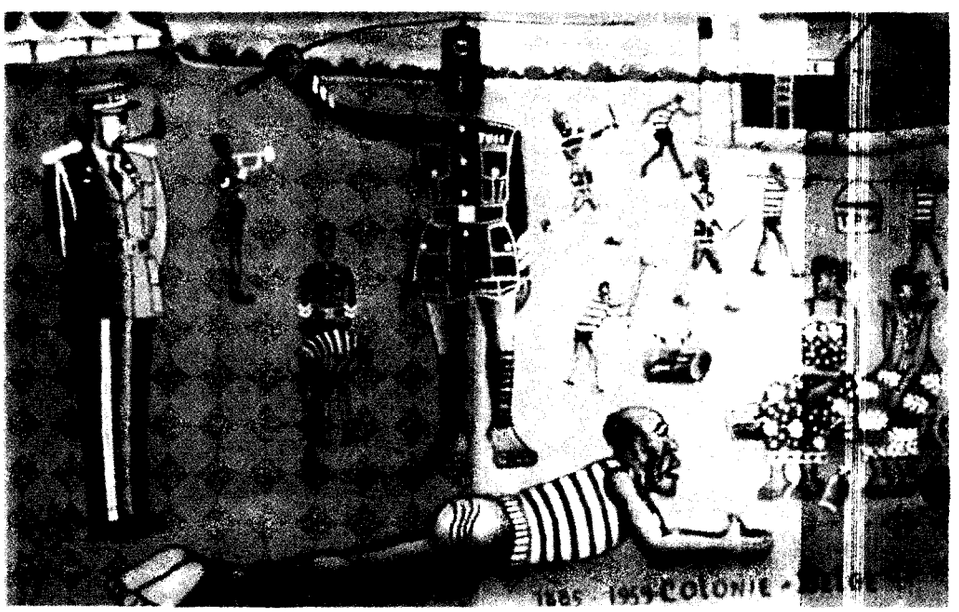
ART

For life's sake

Kobena Mercer

WHEN THE IMPACT of awesome historical change impels 'ordinary' people to paint and draw, the challenges to conventional aesthetic categories can reveal a new force field of connections between culture, politics and modernity. In five popular art movements — from Chile, China, Zaire, Hiroshima and Greenham Common — Guy Brett discerns the energy of a creative impulse, emphatically collective in its urgent need to communicate, memorialise and make sense of traumatic events. **Through Our Own Eyes** (Heretic/GMP, £8.95) provides an 'insider view' of modern history. Here, the voices and visions of a postmodern popular culture use the local and the vernacular to re-define those Eurocentric conceptions of the 'universal' that have the power to annilihlate us all.

The improvisational nature of these artworks and their aura of 'amateurism' make them vulnerable to appropriation by the art-market as naive art. Much to his credit, Guy Brett avoids fetishising the Third World by carefully placing each movement in its political and historical context. Thus, for example, the apparent child-like quality of the *arpilleras* (patchwork pictures) produced by Chilean women can only be understood as a stark contrast to the brutal realities they depict; the images are often coded symbols designed to escape the attention of the authorities. The collective process of production is crucial, as in the drawings by survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to exorcise pain and terror, to create a monument and testament. The urban African art from Shaba province in Zaire has a similar function in dealing with the traumas of colonialism and neo-colonialism. In Kanda-Matulu's history of Zaire in paintings (see below) memories of Lumumba are kept alive by a mode of depiction which serves as a pretext for oral storytelling: 'meanings' are completed by the contexts in which they're received, in the 'salons' of Shaba city folk.



Urban African art is especially interesting in its refusal of an either/or choice between tradition and modernity. In shop-signs and billboards (see above) the two are fused in new and complex ways; in toys made by children, waste material is magically transformed into the image of unattainable commodities like cars or cassette players. Similar dynamics are at work in the landscape paintings of Chinese peasants, where the values of an agricultural community (and *not* the bureaucracy) are reflected in the skills that detail each leaf on a tree, each component of an irrigation pump.

Brett wisely avoids any overbearing 'theory', which makes this handsome and modest work all the more relevant as a radical contribution to the now academicised debates on postmodernism. Far from making a fetish out of the 'Other', he points to a postmodern politics that realises that if there is to be a future after the 'end', then it lies in the struggle to transform relations between the First, Second and Third Worlds. □

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CRIME

Hot and cold

Nick Kimberley

INTERVIEWED ON the radio recently, Julian Rathbone said that he'd written his latest novel, ***Zdt*** (Heinemann, £10.95) in response to a tip from his agent: he should write a rain-forest novel, rain-forests were big this year. This was a calculated outrage: novels, even thrillers, should be written out of some inner compunction, and yet here was Rathbone writing to commercial order. Worse, he was reducing an important concern to the status of thrill-fodder.

Rathbone knew what he was about. Novels from the highest to the lowest are items in the marketplace: the international prize circus ensures that even a novelist as passionate as Salman Rushdie is a nice little earner, while everyone knows that Mills and Boon writers get plot construction kits. Rathbone was reminding us of the state of play, which readers and reviewers might be reluctant to admit, but which novelists are forced to confront.

In fact, *Zdt* isn't a rain-forest thriller so much as a tale of individual integrity standing firm against the villainy of the multinationals. A small coffee-producing cooperative in Costa Rica is thriving happily while a nearby research project seems to have discovered a mutant form of maize which has the potential to upset the balance between powerful and poor nations, in favour of the latter. The big boys will have none of it and set about destroying coffee growers and maize developers.

So far, so good: Rathbone has done his research — in Kew, not Costa Rica, and nothing wrong with that — and his South America is convincingly sultry. There's no doubt that Rathbone is on the side of right, not might, but his drama is played out entirely through the perceptions of Europeans and Americans. South Americans become merely local colour. His main device for surmounting this colonising problem is to give over much of this narrative to a black woman, wife to one of the main characters. Here he has a figure who can represent both the 'primitive' and the 'sophisticated' European. She can analyse the situation, but won't abandon her earthy ways: represented for the most part by her repeatedly breast-feeding her baby, an activity which Rathbone observes with almost voyeuristic enthusiasm.

It's difficult to see how Rathbone could solve the problem of perspective: if he'd offered us the Costa Ricans' point of view, he'd be accused of annexing their voice. He doesn't, and so I accuse him of Europomorphism. Perhaps there is no solution for a British novelist tackling something larger than the cosy provincialities of life at home. *Zdt* may not quite manage the possibilities it addresses, but it's a worthy attempt — and only in the present era could 'worthy' be used as a pejorative.

After the global ambitions of *Zdt*, Rayner Heppenstall's **The Pier** (Allison & Busby, £9.95 & £3.95) returns us to the miniature perspectives of a south coast seaside town, which Rathbone himself has tackled in *A Last Resort*. Were he still alive, Heppenstall might object to his novel being relegated to the crime fiction slot in the *NS*, but there it is in the blurb: *The Pier* is a 'murder story' and murders only happen in crime fiction, of course. Heppenstall, who lived by the sea, writes about a novelist living by the sea who is writing a novel about living by the sea . . . and so on. His fictional novelist is bad-tempered, ageing uncomfortably and obsessed with minutiae: how many steps from the pier to his house, the tiny gradations of time passing, the problems of composting. Against this background, the murder is almost secondary, simply further proof of the man's crankiness: he even finds Thatcher 'admirable'. Heppenstall writes so cleverly that it's never easy to work out to what extent he is his own character, but the photo inside the back cover suggests that this is a portrait from life.

The modern thriller covers vast areas of the globe, but usually seen through 'our' eyes: Rathbone takes us to South America, James Melville to Japan, William Marshall to Hong Kong and the Philippines. No matter how well versed in the respective cultures these novels are, they are effectively postcards sent back home. We rarely get the chance to read thrillers written through native eyes. Even the range of European thrillers available in English is small: the odd Simenon or Dürrenmatt and, if we're lucky, someone remembers to reprint some Sjöwall/Wahlöö; and that's about it.

Refreshing then to read Matti Joensuu's **Harjunpaa and the Stone Murders** (trans. Raili Taylor, Gollancz, £8.95) and Ella Griffiths' **The Water Widow** (trans. J. Basil Cowlishaw, Quartet, £8.95), the one Finnish, the other Norwegian. Joensuu is a copper himself and has been shortlisted for Finland's equivalent of the Booker Prize for his crime novels. Ella Griffiths, meanwhile, introduces *two* poetry-writing cops, something even P.D. James wouldn't dream of. Such literacy in the Old Bill might be a measure of how seriously Scandinavia takes its policemen, if not its crime fiction.

Both novels are police procedurals showing the lawmen (not many women) in the modern style: harrassed, fundamentally decent, trying to lead truncated home lives. Both are concerned and serious — worthy in the pejorative sense, if you like — about the decay of urban life: unhappy families, old age, drug-addicted youth, violence on TV and in the streets. Joensuu even dares to suggest that the police might be losing the battle;

Divorce

Andrew Clifford

Anton, a slice of forehead removed, looks;
If you're a salesman from Leeds, a traveller,
Remove the radio at night and drive
To your appointed kerb in silence.
Anton, a slice of forehead removed, is speechless.
Take a left, then a right, then you're off
The main road, and in the zoo, driving slowly
Like a maniac. Women linger in the violet light,
The gutter is dry tonight, the evening breathless,
And from the street a violet light is pouring.
Women shift their high-heel shoes in flower petals,
Puffing up like fragrance as they walk.
Linda is in scarlet. Linda is dead. Linda is scarlet.
If you're a salesman from Leeds, a travelling man,
Stop your car and listen to the motor purring,
Insect-like and satisfied. Then drive for miles.
Anton, his forehead sliced and bleeding, lifts his hat,
A gesture of notification and contempt.
She walked to the halted car, leant into its window,
Her blowing linen dress was flowing,
Flowing like a long and lucid draught of wine,
Melted, wet upon the throat, and as she spoke
She cringed into the car. Twenty quid later
She bragged and shuffled as she left his car.
And the food and fine things for children
This would buy! I waited in the night, watching —
Then drove off. That old anticipatory pleasure
Had fingered me tonight, and pulled the trigger.
When it exploded — oh! — so loud I closed my eyes
On impact, and missed the fullest blow.
She lay all in a heap. She'd pissed herself, and blood
Was hardening around the little cuts.
Even though still warm, she looked heavy,
Impossible to drag or carry. Anton received the keys;
We passed on, drove round the centre and back home.
Anton left, I went to bed and chatted with my wife.

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only the birth of his new child redeems Harjunpaa. There is much here that is familiar from Anglophone police novels, but Joensuu (not surprisingly, perhaps) and Griffiths share a faith in the fundamental goodness of their police force, which many British and American writers might find embarrassing. That doesn't necessarily make them lesser novels — Joensuu in particular seems worth reading more of; perhaps it tells us something about the place of the police force in contemporary Scandinavia, but you won't catch me speculating on that after reading just two novels. □

FICTION

Sparkler

Oliver Harris

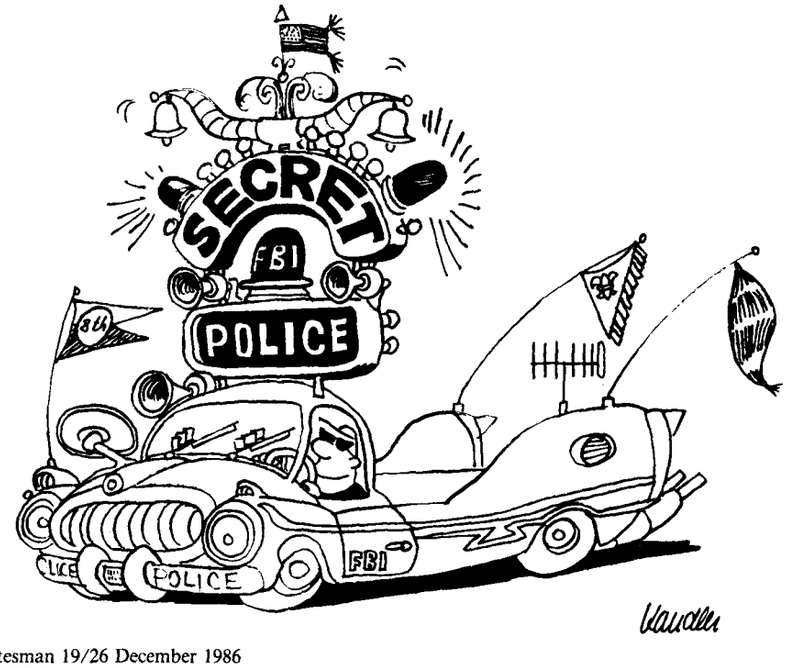
The First Book of Grabinoulor
PIERRE ALBERT-BIROT *trans.* BARBARA WRIGHT
Atlas £7.95 & £4.50

WHAT THE LARGE PRINT giveth, the small print taketh away — it's as true for literary history as it is for legal documents. Sometimes the forgotten footnotes to Modernism turn out to be more relevant, exciting or innovative than what passes for the Main Text. One such footnote is Pierre Albert-Birot, remembered mainly as a friend of Apollinaire and editor of the French avant-garde journal *SIC* in which, from 1916 to 1919, he published and promoted works by Aragon, Breton, Reverdy and Soupault. But it is his own prolific output of experimental plays, poetry and prose, in particular the long-neglected 'epic' *Grabinoulor*, that flaunts the folly of The Canon and acts as a reminder of the need of its constant review.

Grabinoulor is a catherine wheel of effervescent, unpunctuated prose; it bursts with acrobatic, poetic virtuosity and an astonishing *joie de vivre*. It shares the energetic aesthetic of simultaniety — and the typographic licence — championed under the banner of *parola in libertà* in Futurist manifestos before and during WW 1. But, unlike Marinetti, whose telegraphic barrage of language and typeface shouted forth a martial and mechanical future, PAB, as Albert-Birot was known, celebrated a purer energy of eternal delight, in a form as radically new and yet, maybe, more historically enduring.

Grabinoulor belongs with the Pataphysics of Alfred Jarry, sharing a similar cavalier attitude to science and the wild roller-coaster picaresque of his *Faustroll*. It's influenced also by a different tradition: its hero, for whom time and space are elastic, inhabits a version of the comically haphazard mental space of *Tristram Shandy*. Grabinoulor's train of thought races, like that of Sterne's picaro-narrator, in perpetual if truant motion; from seeking out the Empire of the Dead, to squaring the circle in Paris, to tilting the earth's axis in order to restore the perpendicularity of a badly made statuette. Child-like but never childish, *Grabinoulor* is also an epic of erotic appetite and enquiry, picking up the division of the sexes from where Plato's *Symposium* left off and celebrating the flesh in poems whose witty or tender originals are wisely kept in parallel with their translations.

A fairy-tale for adults, a tour de force of formal ingenuity and story-telling exuberance, *Grabinoulor* is an uplifting and extraordinary work, its publication impressive both for the liveliness of Barbara Wright's translation and for the imagination of Atlas Press. Their welcome resurrection of such early avant-garde figures as PAB, while probably not affecting revision of what Roger Shattuck dubbed the Banquet Years, certainly promises treats for interested readers. A second instalment of *Grabinoulor* is on the cards and, in the meantime, Book One should take the edge off Christmas hangovers. □



BIOGRAPHY

Women at work

Roz Kaveney

Jane and May Morris: A Biographical Story 1839-1938
JAN MARSH *Pandora* £12.95 & £4.95

THERE ARE, in the first half of the story, aspects of the fairy-tale: the gawky, swarthy daughter of a stable hand suddenly made the icon of romance by a group of rich amateur artists; the ironic practicalities (the way that the artist who decides to marry her sends her off to have her etiquette, housekeeping and accent improved); the famous extramarital affair with its madnesses and ecstasies and its probable (and sensible) non-consummation.

And then there are the years of work — with the husband as talented embroiderer of his designs and hers — and those, perhaps, are what end up counting. Her love letters are like any other; what we know of her beauty we know through the eyes of a really rather third-rate couple of painters; but the hours of stitching are still there and stand. And, in a lesser key, the same is true of Jane Morris' daughter: what we have of *her* craft work is attractive and, subject to some viccissitudes of taste, permanent. Her preservation of her father's artistic legacy and her canniness in the matter of her parents' scandal are partly a decision to live through her father, but taken in a way that makes it difficult to approach him without looking over her shoulder. And her editions of her father's work should matter more to us than her failed marriage and love affair, and her belated reassessment of her sexuality.

Jan Marsh's account of the lives of Jane and May Morris is solid and often sensitive, and places a proper emphasis on the importance in their lives of sheer dogged work. It could perhaps have done with a more coherent estimate of the permanent worth of the results, a judgment which both women could bear. And it suffers too much — in those areas in which there are gaps in our certain knowledge — from that sort of creeping hypothesis which in the next sentence or so becomes a fact from which another hypothesis can be drawn — most notably, and unnecessarily, in Marsh's interpretation of William Morris' behaviour. But in general Marsh's summary of, say, our knowledge of the sexual mores of the class from which Jane Morris rose is succinct and apposite.

She is almost certainly right in her attribution to sheer practicality of Jane's yielding to her besotted admirer's proposals, but perhaps underestimates the extent to which subsequently fair play (and the keeping of a contract) were a part of her motivation. Surprisingly, Jan Marsh is a deal too soft on the slimy charmer Rossetti, whose repertoire of methods for wooing his friend's wife included the handing of caricatures of the other man to his daughters. She assumes, and makes it matter, that, in the end, nothing much happened except for modelling and windbaggery, but leaves vague the reasons why. Jane's bad back and Rossetti's consumption of pharmaceuticals will

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have been factors — as also, I suspect, Jane's guess that for Rossetti an adultery consummated would make her not Guinevere but one of the fallen women he moralised over and exploited.

Marsh's interpretation of Morris' attitude neglects the general statements about free love and forgiving partnership in his utopian works — also in the dramatic fragment of 1872, available but miscatalogued (presumably deliberately) in May's bequest of her father's manuscripts to the British Library. The situation in this drama is sufficiently close to the facts of Morris' life that we can take his hero's motto, 'Bear and Forebear', as sufficient personal statement.

As for Jane's attitude to her husband . . . Well, Shaw may have behaved in an unforgiveably creepy way to May, who had as bad a taste in men as her mother (though, fortunately, reasonable taste in women) but his assessment in *Candida* of Jane — the woman who had mocked his vegetarianism with suet pudding — has, however sentimentalised, the ring of truth to it. Jane and May were forced by their times to live as adjuncts, but they still managed to make most of the important decisions. □

MYTHOLOGY

God the father

Michèle Roberts

The Messianic Legacy
MICHAEL BAIGENT, RICHARD LEIGH, HENRY LINCOLN *Cape* £12.95

IN *The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail* Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln suggested that Jesus Christ was a legitimate king of Israel; that he married and had children; that these children perpetuated his bloodline until, some three and a half centuries later, it merged with the Merovingian dynasty of France; and that the Prieuré de Sion, a secret society, has, as its avowed objective, the restoration of the rightful heir of Jesus to the throne of modern France. Badly written, unscholarly, slipshod in its arguments as it was, the book attested to the continuing power of a particularly patriarchal form of the Christian myth in this century, which has also seen its fictional and subversive investigation by writers such as D. H. Lawrence, Robert Graves and Nikos Kazantzakis.

In this sequel the authors assert that Jesus, as leader of the Nazarene Party, was a tough freedom-fighter (his henchman Simon 'call me Rocky' Peter), put to death by the Romans for inciting large-scale riots but luckily survived by his twin brother Thomas and heirs. The established Church never completely succeeded in stamping out this 'true' Nazarene tradition, which denied the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection to concentrate on Jesus as *worldly* king and which supposedly flourished in Egypt before being brought to Spain and, thence, to the Celtic Church. The longing for a Messiah, unassuaged by the 'ersatz religions' of Stalinist Communism and German Nazism (splendid pic. of Hitler togged up as a Grail Knight), will finally be met when the Prieuré de Sion, however unfortunately mixed up with nasty contemporary right-wing machinations and scandals, demonstrates commitment to a renewal of chivalric ideals by restoring the long-lost Messiah as monarch to a United States of Europe, peace to a world riven by conflict and a sense of meaning to its spiritually starved millions.

Even leaving aside the question of whether this book isn't simply a hoax perpetrated by the Prieuré de Sion or by its oh-so-chivalrically-named authors, it's easy to dismiss the central thesis of *The Messianic Legacy*. Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln are over-fond of sweeping cross-cultural generalisations; lack a sense of history; don't understand that the Gospels (New Testament or apocryphal) are carefully constructed *literary* texts. Their notion of evidence is laughable; anything left *out* of a source such as the New Testament has obviously been censored by the Christian authorities and so can happily be reinvented; anything left *in* has obviously been rewritten by Christian apologists and so can be discarded; any gaps in the authors' chain of 'reasoning' can be filled in from contemporary novels. Speculation is then elided with fact and serious/playful works of literature reduced to 'proof' of a wild theory.

On another level the book deserves some attention as a piece of fiction, as the expression of a pernicious fantasy narrated as fact.

The image of the lost king, the hoped-for Messiah, is surely reinforced by representations of the Powerful Father repressed at the childhood level of the male unconscious, which, if they are not brought to life, named and faced in the process of growing up, may well be susceptible to activation and exploitation by unscrupulous political leaders. Jung warned the German people (too late) of the dangerous power of the Saviour complex, of the evil uses to which repressed religious yearnings could be put if not individually owned and made conscious.

The Powerful Father may be both feared and desired; our culture, in teaching its sons to repress this aspect of desire in order to build the fragile construct of 'real men', renders them vulnerable, in circumstances of social conflict and upheaval, to longings for Superman: if you can't kill the Father and replace him, abase yourself before him and identify with him that way. Hitler understood and manipulated this aspect of the human psyche; we are asked to believe that the Messiah promised by the Prieuré de Sion represents a more wholesome fantasy.

There are no women in *The Messianic Legacy*, no mothers. It's a drama of male gods, of male begetters, of the male bloodline and of male heirs.

Feminists have undermined the heroic fantasy of male self-sufficiency by re-inscribing the figure of the mother in the myth of our beginnings; by emphasising the conflicts, ambiguities and ambivalences which surround that figure for both sexes; by rejecting the option of simply imitating men and choosing to investigate sexual difference. A space has been cleared in which men can start talking about the problems of masculinity. Modern men who are threatened by this, who need to repress their insecurities and anxieties, are the ones most likely to fall prey to the specious promises of *The Messianic Legacy*. □

Coming home

John Mole

The son they love came home then went away.
They asked him why he cried out every night.
He didn't tell them and he couldn't stay.
They try to reach him but he'll never write.
They lie together now. They sleep apart
And still, in dreams, each breaks the other's heart.

And still, in dreams, he's haunted by a child
That stood a moment, looked into his eyes
Not guessing just how far he was defiled,
As if his combat-jacket were disguise.
Don't let the little bastards get to you.
You know exactly what you have to do.

All wars are guilty of their own remorse
And have it out with us before they end.
Some may be just, no doubt. Of course.
In time your enemy becomes your friend.
But there are debts the future can't reclaim —
To kill a child and not to know its name.

To kill a child that couldn't run away,
That stood a moment after it was shot
With puzzled human eyes as if to say
Like you I was so why now am I not?
Then fell. He shot the mother too.
It seemed exactly what he had to do.

And then it seemed exactly where to be
Was nowhere where he had to think of home,
The horror of all words meant lovingly,
The ignorant kindness everyone had shown.
Not only nightmares slay the innocent
And that's the reason why he came and went.

And that's the reason why this can't go on,
And why it's almost culpable to write,
And why I can't stop thinking of our son
And of how easily we sleep at night,
How in this house if anybody screams
We joke next morning. It was only dreams.

Oh only dreams that simply come and go,
That tell us nothing that we can't forget.
We lie beside each other snugly, two
Such comfortable, cautious parents, yet
There was a child who came and went away.
They said *We love you* but he could not stay.

A collection of John Mole's poetry, Homing, *is published by Secker next month.*

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PAPERBACKS

Social diseases

Alan Brien

ALL HUMAN LIFE (in the *News of the World* sense anyway) will probably be divided from now on into BA and AA — Before Aids and After Aids. Already, almost every novel I read has become a period piece, a hangover from an age of innocence when all jolly fornicators had to worry about was the Bomb.

Updike described adultery as the last, great adventure. BA, that seemed overheated hyperbole, given that its hazards were largely curable, its dangers rarely fatal. AA, his description begins to sound more realistic. In fiction, as in fact, we have to acknowledge the terrors as well as the delights of promiscuity, with the one-night stand now nearer a duel than a treat, the stranger in your arms not so much a gift parcel as a time bomb.

There will be some gains on the page. It will no longer be enough (to adapt a Chandlerism) to enliven a dull passage by having a man come through the door with a penis in his hand. Sex will move aside to give more room for politics, economics, history, philosophy, for the paradoxes of race, nationalism, war; for the psychology of the tyrant, the revolutionary, the torturer, the hitman, the warrior.

Vassily Aksyonov's **The Island of Crimea** (trans. Michael Henry Heim, Abacus, £4.95) manages to be both BA and AA. Its Soviet author, recently flown to the USA, has assembled an sf thriller which turns on 'as if . . .' — a series of linked propositions about an alternative near-future. We are to understand that a Soviet Union, almost ready for Gorbachev, has finally lost patience after 70 years with a Westernised Crimea, a sort of Black Sea Hong Kong or Taiwan, where all the extreme temptations of capitalism are exhibited like *Dallas* played for real.

It is BA in that sensual appetites for sex, and surrogates such as power, food, drink, clothes, cars, executive toys, are slaveringly indulged on both sides without any drawbacks except puritan guilt, and not much of that. It is AA in that all the soft porn and cheap thrills are irradiated with irony. East and West, in alternative close-ups, are exposed as both better and worse than they have yet become. Under the guise of a crowd-pleaser, Aksyonov still subjects the ideals of right and left to a relentless barrage of intellectual criticism. This time his adopted society comes off better than his native land by a short head, though I would not count on that bias continuing into the next novel.

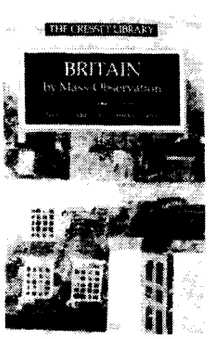
Crimea will go far towards reconciling a new AA crowd to staying home with a paperback. Madison Smartt Bell's **Waiting for the End of the World** (Abacus, £4.95) could easily frighten anyone off leaving the house ever. His island is Manhattan, but it remains, like Aksyonov's Crimea, a universal country of the mind. That mind, like many today, is near the end of its tether, and Bell's contrasts between filthy rich and filthy poor, a handful of megalomaniacs and millions of the powerless, a band of terrorists and an army of victims, frighteningly outweigh any such between Russia and the West. The reader crawls, like the slug in *Apocalypse Now*, along a razor's edge, divided, wounded, unable to slide free. BA, but as awful, incredible, unbearable as any scenario of life AA.

In **Metro** (Methuen, £2.50), another recent Soviet emigrant, Alexander Kaletski, gives us a Candide's eye-view of today's Russia, some of the time literally, most of the time metaphorically, from the level of the Moscow underground. Here the black economy, rather as in Britain, contributes far more to national efficiency than the authorities can ever bring themselves to admit. It also slops over into drugs, smuggling, petty crime, dodging the call-up, cheating the state, bending the emigration rules, and the wholesale youth culture now on the decline in the West. Kaletski, like Aksyonov, tends to picture life on this side of the great divide as far more luxurious and enterprising than it can ever possibly be for any escapees lacking their exceptional talents. The knowledge that the author of *Metro*, a boisterous, idealistic, embittered, satirical comedy, could not be a success in Russia is more of an indictment than anything he writes.

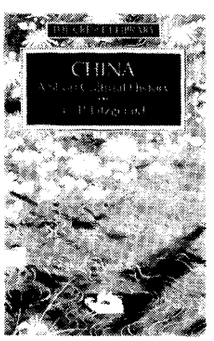
The imaginary Mediterranean peninsula constructed by Jan Morris for her **Last Letters from Hav** (Penguin, £2.95) bears a strong resemblance to Aksyonov's Crimea and, within its borders too, most extremes of history, culture and nation meet at some moment or other. It is

GOOD BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

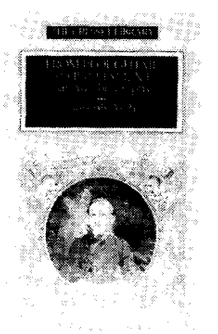
(and Easter, and your birthday, and your holiday, and every other day of the year).



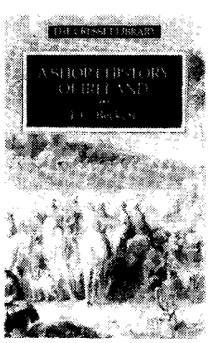
Britain by Mass Observation
With a new introduction by Angus Calder £5.95
"retains all the energy and anger with which it was compiled"
The London Standard
"classic book... enthusiastic, evocative and illuminating"
The Observer



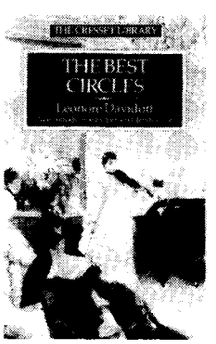
China: A Short Cultural History
by C. P. Fitzgerald £7.95
"(a) solid golden oldie"
The Observer
"a remarkable synthesis of cultural history"
The Guardian



From Ploughtail to Parliament
An Autobiography by Joseph Arch £5.95
Foreword by Norman Willis,
"immensely vigorous autobiography"
The London Standard



A Short History of Ireland by J. C. Beckett £5.95
"full of enlightenment"
Belfast Telegraph
"should be read by all who want to understand modern Irish politics and particularly by Irishmen"
The Economist



The Best Circles
by Leonore Davidoff
Introduction by Victoria Glendinning **£4.95**
"cracks the codes of... society in the Victorian and Edwardian ages"
Sunday Times
"very readable on the manners of the season"
The Guardian

Wittgenstein
by W. W. Bartley III £5.95
"a biographical study of the Austrian aristocrat who gave away his fortune to teach children in a village school, and incidentally provoke their parents"
The Guardian
"A farrago of lies and poppycock"
The Human World

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FROM CENTURY HUTCHINSON

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inventive, witty and anecdotal, like an anthology sewn together from all the best travel books you have ever read. But it seems to have strayed uneasily into the novel category and lacks the essential tearaway, take-off jet-power of true fiction.

I have long advocated christening that much mistitled convenience, the urinal, 'the euphemism'. Some people do, according to **Fair of Speech** (Oxford, £4.95), a lively, scholarly, outspoken analysis, by several hands, of the euphemism in Sex, Death, Politics, the Press, Religion and more. I learned a lot, laughed a lot, and will continue to loot it whenever the subject crops up, which is often. A pity the weakest essay is by the editor, D. J. Enright, who seems not to have taken in all his contributors have contributed.

Briefly: Michael De-La-Noy's **The Honours System** (Allison & Busby, £3.95) and Kenneth Gregory's **The Third Cuckoo** (Unwin, £2.95) are highly recommended as travelling companions and for bedside browsing. De-La-Noy illuminates many dusty corners of the ridiculous racket to great comic effect and where he cannot always shine his torch in recent years a nudge is as good as a wink. Gregory is almost always po-faced but his lovingly cruel collection, the third in a row of letters to *The Times*, tells us far more about how the upper-middle executive class likes to see itself than any other work I know. □

Leaving America

Gwyneth Lewis

Soon as check-in's over I start killing time,
phone you to see if you're still at home
after my leaving; I guess where you'd be,
sweet-talk my way past my own goodbye

like a lonely neighbour reluctant to leave.
'No girlfriends out of town. Love
doesn't travel well' we'd said.
Two empty glasses set side by side

squint round the room with slit lemon eyes
watching it for me; we take our ease
as the call's still local. Then the last dime's gone.
Your room goes dark on me again.

I catch a man's eye at the newspaper stand,
cheer up immediately, smile, and extend
the last of my loose change to the girl at the till.
A traveller's tale to come, I can tell.

The moon hangs topaz over rippling clouds
heating long sandbanks along the sky's
cool interim countries on which we stare down,
hurtling towards a two a.m. dawn.

But the real travellers stay put.
You and I, now, got easy travel down pat
in your bedroom, when, silent we'd hear through
the blue
traffic and laughter waft up from below.

ART

Medium of exchange

Paul Binding

Lorca: The Drawings
HELEN OPPENHEIMER *Herbert Press* £15.95

NOT ONLY WAS LORCA'S literary output prodigious and formally various but his creativity extended into the other arts on a scale hard to parallel. In the field of music he became learned in the ancient Spanish inheritance and was an outstanding pianist and competent composer. His interest in the cinema led him to suggest some of Bunuel's most notorious images, to pay homage to Buster Keaton and to write the filmscript, *A Trip to the Moon*, welcomely included in this book.

But the purely visual arts were even more important to him: he gave them a great deal of thought, they clearly influenced his literary productions and he executed an estimated 400 drawings — most of them in pen and ink or coloured pencil. And Helen Oppenheimer has assembled a generous number of them, well reproduced in both black-and-white and colour, and has provided a useful biographical and critical commentary which can also stand up on its own. She has, too, incorporated in the book 'Thoughts on Modern Art', which, like so many of Lorca's lectures, is more meditative poem than exposition. The whole book is valuable for anyone interested in Lorca and, Lorca being the great and seminal genius he was, for anyone interested in the arts this century.

Helen Oppenheimer concentrates on four groups of Lorca's drawings: those that reflect his quest for personal identity, those that overtly reveal his intimate relation to Dalí, Surrealism, the Catalan school; those that are closely connected to, if not illustrative of, poems (most particularly the difficult sequence *El Poeta en Nueva York*); and those intended as designs for stage-sets and costumes for his own and others' plays. Obviously, the categories overlap and there is a strong stylistic and thematic unity to his visual oeuvre.

The androgynous figure, the concealment or attaining of identity through mask and disguise and the apparatus of the folk or religious icon — these recur throughout his drawings as they do throughout his poems and plays. The young girl with the ruff collar could be a boy; the young man with the phallic crook could be a girl; harlequins and masks and muses are both boy *and* girl; objects are caught at points of fusion or metamorphosis. We are particularly in the world of those still undervalued plays: *El público (The Audience)* and *As que pasen cinco anos (As soon as Five Years Pass)*.

Those who come to this book because of their interest in Lorca's most famous literary works will perhaps be struck, if not surprised, by the domination of the rôle- and gender-obsessed, artifice-loving, High Camp side of Lorca. The Lorca of the penetrating psychological and sociological analyses, the creator of passionate, atavistic life; the extraordinary spiritual voyager: none of these is there. But perhaps it is pointless to expect otherwise or to bemoan this: the main reason for the absence of these other Lorcas must surely be the severe circumscription of his technical abilities as artist. The inextricably related preoccupations with artifice and androgyny *do* constitute a vital feature of Lorca's work, one that has gone too little stressed, and Helen Oppenheimer is to be praised for redressing the balance both by assembling these pictures and by analysing these elements in them. But what the book shows also is that it is only in the medium to which they give unstinting and continuous devotion that artists achieve originality.

In his poems and plays Lorca wanted to do what he felt only he could do; in his visual work he wanted to do what others were doing. His drawings are often identifiably Lorquian and do, at times, possess a real and captivating pathos. But — modestly reflecting the almost boyish admiration that Lorca felt for Picasso, Dalí, Juan Gris, Miró (about all of whom he wrote and spoke fervently) — they seem wholly of their time.

This feeling is surely confirmed when we turn to Lorca's lecture on modern art, exemplarily translated here so as to do full justice to the brilliant images. Lorca is an ardent apologist for Cubism and Surrealism, the Hispanitude of which he jubilantly salutes. (And, in doing so, he provides wonderful incidental summaries of his own poetic art.) But I don't believe that he understood or knew much about work outside that under whose spell he had fallen. Impressionists are lumped together to be crudely dismissed; the diversity within Expressionism he has hardly grasped. His statements are the less impressive for being given with such authoritative (if infectious) panache.

Helen Oppenheimer offers us a most sensible and informative account of Lorca's career and work, and is sound on those two aspects of them that have received such curiously varying treatment: his homosexuality and his very sensitive politico-social conscience. I must part company with her, though, in her apparent wish to diminish the anguish of Lorca's time in New York (on which this book is, in fact, an admirable gloss). Stating that while in New York Lorca was able to proceed with work on his delightful tragi-comedy *La zapatera prodigiosa (The Shoe-maker's Prodigious Wife)* she says: 'He could not have been suffering a very profound nervous crisis if he was able to manipulate two disparate styles of writing simultaneously.' Surely, in so far as any deduction can be made from this fact, it is quite the opposite one, for the work reveals the poet's mind as being deeply riven. □

Paul Binding's Lorca: The Gay Imagination *(GMP) was published last year. A collection of his own poetry and that of John Horder,* Dreams and Speculations *(GMP), was published last month.*

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The defence debate: readers reply to John Lloyd

Space permits only a small selection of points from an unprecedentedly large postbag on the editor's leading article: 'The policy must change' (5 Dec.)

Our readers' debate with Peter Kellner on 'Democratic Socialism' will be published on 2 Jan. '87.

Julian Goodare, Edinburgh
You must change the *New Statesman*'s defence policy. Or rather, since your garbled editorial of 5 December didn't actually say what defence policy you wanted, you must stop knocking Labour's.

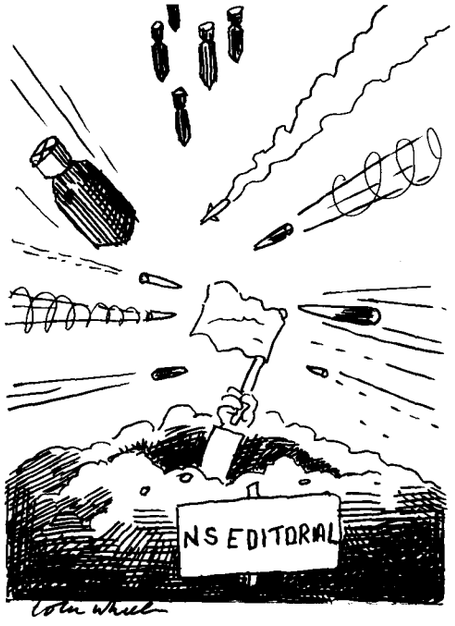
It is *because* Britain is still politically important that getting rid of our nuclear weapons would set an example which would echo round the world; and it is *because* so few of the world's 50,000 nuclear weapons are based here that we can contemplate doing so without seriously upsetting the strategic balance. On the subject of the strategic balance, the editorial took for granted the Tory assumption that current negotiations are meaningful, and disarmament agreements are just around the corner. 'Reduce the arsenals more rapidly than they otherwise might'? — had you not noticed that they are *increasing* their arsenals as fast as they can, and clearly intend to do so indefinitely?

Another Tory myth is the old, false dichotomy between unilateralism and multilateralism; and this piece swallowed it hook, line and sinker. In fact, unilateralism is an *integral part* of multilateralism. No arms control agreement has ever been concluded without a series of tension-reducing unilateral initiatives. One current example is the Soviet moratorium on nuclear testing. The tragedy is that the West is not reciprocating with initiatives of its own. That's why the editorial's remark on 'equal and verifiable reductions' could have been made by Mrs Thatcher. The writer was obviously unaware, too, that technical advances have reduced 'verification' to a Tory red herring. And what about the Soviet promise to reciprocate any British nuclear disarmament? I hope future editorials will be written by greater experts.

Public opinion is far more complex than the editorial suggested. People want to be defended, certainly; they want to feel secure. But they are deeply worried by the nuclear threat, and they want a *responsible* defence policy. Cruise and other US nuclear bases are deeply unpopular — especially with Reagan's finger on the button. So is Trident, both on the grounds of cost and of escalation of the arms race. Labour has a comfortable and secure majority of the public favouring two of the major planks in its platform. Even the third plank, getting rid of Polaris, is favoured by a substantial and probably growing minority. Meanwhile the supporters of Polaris are hopelessly divided, and will become more so as the submarines themselves are seen to be rusting away; none of the proposed replacements commands much support.

Joseph Nicholas, London SW1
Labour's defence policy is not well thought through, not sufficiently campaigned on even within the party, and riddled with contradictions. But John Lloyd's editorial isn't much better.

He states, for example, that 'the electorate continue to insist that the nation's defence is the first duty of government' — but a few sentences later says that Labour 'has made prominent the horror hidden within technical and political arguments over defence, and continued to insist that, while they exist "security" is a delusion'. By his own logic, therefore, this should mean that because Labour has exposed the bankruptcy of nuclear 'defence' the electorate is convinced that the nation can only be defended by non-nuclear means. That it hasn't must owe more to the party's failure properly to campaign on the issue than to a supposition that the policy itself is wrong.



Just as confused is his later claim that 'Britain is very important' because 'it carries a greater persuasive force in the US than other West European governments'. It is past time that these fantasies of an alleged Special Relationship with the US were consigned to the dustbin of history. No British Prime Minister since Attlee, interceding with President Truman during the Korean War in 1950, has ever exercised any influence over the foreign policy of the United States, or is ever likely to. Indeed, under Mrs Thatcher the opposite has happened: a supine acceptance of whatever transient whims have emerged from the Reagan White House. Regaining our independence would count for a lot more in Washington than Lloyd's suggestion that a Labour government do nothing to rock the NATO boat.

Brian Sedgemore MP, House of Commons
An editorial which says that the Labour Party should change its nuclear policy not on principle but because some people disagree with it is not one that can be taken seriously. There was no intellectual or factual input into the editorial and it seemed to be based on no more than that ideological prejudice which is antithetical to everything that a socialist party stands for.

I have bought the *New Statesman* for as long as I can remember. I can't see myself doing so again. I believe that loyalty to principles and to Party is not entirely to be despised.

Ernest Wood, Devon
We should congratulate, not disparage, John Lloyd for his courage in asserting that the Labour Party's defence policy must change if it continues to be opposed by the majority of the electorate.

The Labour Party should undertake an intensive campaign in favour of unilateralism this winter (including at least one party political broadcast); commission our own opinion poll next spring to measure the response of the electorate; take action to modify our defence policies if they are clearly unacceptable; and have these changes endorsed by the Party at a special delegate Conference or through the post.

Although ending our commitment to unilateralism at the next election (if that's what it came to) would be a bitter pill for us all to swallow, it would represent no surrender of principle. It would be a recognition that on this issue (as on many others) we do not yet carry the electorate with us. I, and many millions of people that are merely managing to survive in hopeful anticipation of a Labour government in the near future, would find it morally indefensible for the Labour Party to rush heedlessly into an election with a defence policy that is not only opposed by two thirds of the electorate but would also fail to advance world peace by one iota even if we were able to carry it through.

Surely no one believes that for us to renounce our nuclear weapons would mean that Britain would cease to be a target if war should occur in Europe or that NATO give up its policy of 'first use' merely because it was opposed by a Labour government? Even our friends in America are reacting adversely to our unilateralism and many members of Congress are suggesting that in those circumstances they would be more likely to remove their conventional forces rather than the nuclear umbrella — the very antithesis of what we are trying to achieve.

Christopher Donnison, London N4
It is appalling that the Editor of the *New Statesman* should accept the two central lies which sustain the production and deployment (and possible use of) nuclear weapons by the West; firstly that the Soviet Union would attack Western Europe given half the chance and secondly that the purpose of nuclear weapons is to counter this threat.

There is simply no evidence of the Soviet 'threat'. On the contrary, that country has been attacked twice by the West during its short history, on the first occasion by forces including British and American troops attempting to destroy that State at its birth. With the exception of the Second World War the United States's goal has consistently been one of political and military encirclement of the Soviet Union, from Norway to Japan, from Canada to Pakistan. ▷

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Martin Ryle, Rodmell, Lewes
The vagaries of the British electoral system mean that one of the chief factors in determining whether Labour forms the next government will be the exact proportions in which the vote splits between the Conservatives and the Alliance, and how these proportions vary from one constituency to the next. Changes in Labour's defence policy are not likely to affect this much. In taking it for granted that a volte face on defence would mean more votes for Labour, you fail to consider whether all those for whom unilateral nuclear disarmament is a priority will meekly vote Labour even if the party abandons its present commitment. It is my guess that many of them will not.

Philip Wyatt, London W7
Labour's defence policy; half-baked and unconvincing. Agreed. Thank you for puncturing the silence. More power to your pen.

A. F. MacDonald, Aberdeen
How can any policy condemned by Caspar Weinberger be wrong?

Janet Bloomfield, Styvechale, Coventry
You agree that NATO should change its policy but you refuse to accept that the NATO establishment needs more than polite requests to confront the illogicalities and inconsistencies of its nuclear weapons strategy: it needs stirring up and it must be forced to face facts. Only the Labour Party, once elected, has the policy to do this. We are going to face immense pressures from the nuclear 'junkies' both before and after an election. If the *New Statesman* decides not to use whatever influence it may have in support of Labour's non-nuclear policy I for one will no longer support *you*.

Alec Lea, Carnforth, Lancs
I am now close to 80 and have been reading the *New Statesman* since Ramsay MacDonald joined the Tories and Philip Snowden as Chancellor said on radio that socialist policies were 'like Bolshevism run mad'. Your betrayal is as bad as that earlier one. What an incredibly cruel way of welcoming home the embattled Neil Kinnock!

Captain (retd.) J. E. Saunders
I am not a Labour Party member and have not always voted Labour in the past but Labour's defence policy deserves every support. It is courageous and absolutely right. It is the only hope I can see for a safer world. Unilateralism will have an effect which is more symbolic than anything else. This year Russia has unilaterally stopped all nuclear testing. It is a feature of such unilateral steps that they build confidence and trust and help stabilise a process which is currently spiralling upwards into space, a process which is clearly out of control. Such small steps can be safely unilateral. Once trust has been built up it is easier to negotiate a multilateral step which could then be a big step.

Ann Kestenbaum, Nottingham
Do you really believe that Labour can change its policy between now and the election? If it cannot, then isn't your article just another contribution to the sustained American-backed attempt to make sure that Labour doesn't achieve power? Perhaps you feel that the magazine is only read by committed Labour voters anyway. If that is the case, you miscalculate the determination of the right to undermine and divide Labour's leadership and support at a key time in the build-up to the election.

If you want Labour to win, then help it. If that is at the expense of declining the opportunity to express your personal doubts across the first page of the *NS*, then that is the decision you should take. You are not I. F. Stone, the *NS* is not, and never should be, the sort of one-man vehicle he had and the political contexts in which the two of you operate are entirely different.

Michael Gallacher, Whitchurch, Shropshire
I am not challenging your right to say what you said and I freely concede that you raise points which need to be addressed. Nevertheless, I am sure that if my feelings are anything to go by you will have caused great hurt to many people who wish to see Labour's anti-nuclear defence policy given a fair hearing. Reykjavik showed what might be, given the political will on all sides; why can't we capitalise on the hope there engendered and be positive about prospects for nuclear disarmament without allowing our thinking to be blinkered and constrained by the attractions of a fudge?

Tony Wilcock, London W2
For Labour to change its policy would split the party down the middle for starters, it would go far to discrediting the whole peace movement, certainly the CND part of it, and of course it would give the Tories the greatest political gift for a very long time. In effect after such a somersault no one could ever take the Labour Party seriously again. Perhaps all this is what you have in mind and before the election is actually called we shall see the *New Statesman* calling for votes for the Alliance?

Crossed wires

Our story on 'crossed wires' (*NS* 5 Dec.) was pretty crossed itself. We said Paul Sample, the editor of *Liberal News*, overheard on a crossed phone line an official of the Sort Out Sunday campaign offering to put £1.3m into the Tory election coffers: in fact he overheard a Tory official discussing the possibility with a prospective candidate. Simon Bryceson, the Liberals' deputy secretary (we misspelled him and demoted him to an assistant) heard on another crossed line a voice he took to be Jeffrey Archer's in conversation with another voice which asked: 'How did they feel about your resignation?' to which he replied 'It's all too recent for them to have come to any firm conclusion'. Finally, the spokesperson for the Sort Out Sunday campaign is Jenny Jeger, not Lena, who is her distinguished mother. Not bad for a short news story. Our apologies to its characters.

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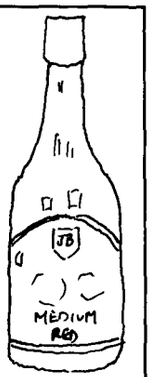

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Quiz answers

Leaders

1. Olof Palme, murdered in Stockholm. 2. Earl Stockton, accused by YC Harry Phibbs of sending prisoners to certain death. 3. P.W. Botha. 4. 'Baby Doc' Duvalier, whose deposition was announced prematurely by the White House. 5. Margaret Thatcher, whose hand was operated on. 6. President Aquino inherited a shoeshopful of footwear from Mrs Marcos. 7. Reagan joined in the human chain for alleviation of poverty.

Improper relations

1. In the December issue of *Women's Review*, containing an extract from 'The Secret Diary of Pandora Braithwaite, 18¼' by Sue Townsend ('Chez Mole' is also correct, but too clever by half). 2. Education Secretary Kenneth Baker, who banned *Jenny Lives with Eric and Martin*. 3. Carol Thatcher, ex-feature writer on the *Daily Telegraph*. 4. Elizabeth Browne, ex-wife of John Browne, Tory MP for Winchester. 5. Victoria Gillick, of the *Mail on Sunday* reporter who got a photo of her daughter Beattie topless on a Greek beach.

Science & Industry

1. Yes — Clive Sinclair sold out to Amstrad boss Alan Sugar. 2. The international tin market collapsed. 3. Mrs Jennifer Guinness was kidnapped and rescued after a siege. 4. Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic Challenger had fuel problems in mid-ocean. 5. Dixons, bidding for Woolworths.

Competitive Sports

1. John McEnroe, who was fined for screaming 'You are the worst official I've had in my life. You'll never work another of my matches again.' 2. Ian Botham, whose manager Tim Hudson was sacked after saying Botham was a pot-smoker. Botham admitted to smoking pot in *Mail on Sunday* 'exclusive' the next month. 3. The Chicago Bears looked as if they were about to score a touchdown on prime-time Monday-night football when CBS interrupted the broadcast with a newsflash on the summit break-up, which accounts for the unpopularity of Reagan's stance ('on Lake Michigan' is too clever by half: lose one mark). 4. In the soccer World Cup quarter-finals, when Argentinian striker Diego Maradona explained that his goal had been the work of 'the hand of God'. 5. British decathlete Daley Thompson, a teetotaller, who put sticking plaster over the Guinness logo on his vest at the Maxwell Games in Edinburgh.

With Nobs on

1. Count von Bismarck, involved in the Olivia Channon drug scandal. 2. In Buckingham Palace, when receiving his honorary knighthood. 3. The Duke of Westminster, the landlord who objects to selling to tenants. 4. Lord Gnome, alias Richard Ingrams of *Private Eye*. 5. The Duchess of Windsor.

New(s)papers

1. The *London Post*, Rupert Murdoch's stalking-horse for the Wapping site. 2. First day's printing of *Today* at Manchester presses interrupted by several breakdowns. 3. Andreas Whittam Smith, now editor of the *Independent*, of Eddie Shah's *Today* when asked for a comment by a *Business Week* journalist. 4. The *News on Sunday*, in its 12-point editorial charter.

Complete Disasters

1. Prisons, scene of roof-top protests. 2. There was a fire in Hampton Court. 3. Teacher Christa McAuliffe, killed in the space shuttle disaster, had planned to broadcast a lesson from the Challenger. 4. The royal yacht evacuted Britons during fighting in Aden. 5. Hindawi slipped explosive to his unsuspecting girlfriend about to catch her plane. 6. The peace convoy.

King William College

1(a) Paid by Jeffrey Archer to prostitute Monica Coghlan whom he had 'never repeat never met'. (b). US Attorney General Ed Meese's estimate of the amount that reached the Contras via Swiss bank accounts. (c). Ralph Halpern's salary as chairperson of Burton. (d). US budget deficit for 1986. (e). Paid to Jilly Cooper by her neighbour Princess Michael for allegedly 'betraying' her in a magazine article. 2(a). Robert Maxwell won a libel case against *Private Eye* which alleged he had tried to buy a peerage. (b). Mrs Marcie-Riviere ditto against the *Spectator*'s Taki who had alleged she was a 'tart'. (c). Neil Hamilton MP ditto against the BBC which had alleged inter alia that he had given a Nazi salute. (d). Members of the London Symphony Orchestra ditto against *Private Eye* for repeated claims that they were drunk and disorderly during rehearsals. (e). Lord Gowrie ditto against the *Express* for claims that he took drugs.

Arts & Crafts

1. Sir Peter Hall, answering criticisms of his earning potential. 2. Matthew Parris MP, who survived on Social Security money, now on *Weekend World*. 3. Peacock Report into BBC suggested hiving off Radios One and Two. 4. Richard Branson in Operation Facelift to keep Britain tidy. 5. A book by Princess Michael of Kent leant rather heavily on an already published work.

Sound & Fury

1. Edwina Currie, criticising Northern diet. 2. NIREX, which broke through the pickets by Lincolnshire Against Nuclear Dumping and others. 3. The Bishop of Durham. 4. 'Ulster Says No' protest made Northern Ireland M1 impassible.

The *New Statesman*'s Year

1. Owen's prospective Tory opponent Tom Jones was alarmed by our publishing extracts from the CIA manual for Nicaraguan Contras explaining among other things how to make Molotov cocktails. 2. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission, who investigated the tampon market and concluded that excess profits 'should act as a magnet to attract new suppliers'. 3. The Conservative Party. 4. Kim Philby. 5. Ex-MP for Knowsley North Robert Kilroy-Silk, in his book *Hard Labour*, which it was to read. 6. Boris Yeltsin, new Moscow party boss, to propaganda workers at a meeting in the House of Political Education, a record of which was leaked and eventually published by the *NS*. 7(a). William Whitelaw (b) Michael Heseltine. (c). Neil Kinnock, outlining his simple new rule to replace the lobby system. (d). Norman Tebbit, in the matter of the BBC.

In the *New Statesman* 50 years ago

1. Michael Foot. 2. Ramsay MacDonald. 3. The abdication of Edward VIII. 4. Evelyn Waugh (about David Garnett's review of *Waugh in Abyssinia*). 5. John Maynard Keynes'.

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The salary associated with this post is currently **£11,095.24** plus **LVs** and **26 days holiday.**

Application forms are available on request from: **Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JB or call 01-828 7788** quoting ref: **Research/RC/KH.**

Due to the large number of applications we receive, unless you are short-listed, we will not be able to contact you again, and so we should like to thank you for your interest in the Union.

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PERSONAL

'SUNSHINE calling FLOWER!: We don't really belong in 'Heartsearch', do we?!. Anyway, here we are under 'Personal' and that we are, aren't we?! We're both knocking on, (admittedly, me more than you), and the chances of Malcolm and Rose getting a mention in the "Statesman" are becoming slighter with our every breath! So, here's hoping you're having a super Christmas in Lllandaffff . . . give your mum a kiss under the mistletoe from that eccentric gentleman in the British Zone. (Are you sure she meant that as a sort of compliment? I'm not . . . I'll have to clear the matter up sometime — telephonically) . . . Now that we've got our mention in this illustrious journal, I'll sign off and get myself a piece of bread and Marmite. Love ya . . .' Box (51)4277. W51.7

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ATTRACTIVE, WARM-HEARTED MAN (60), wide interests (incl. arts) seeks attractive woman, any circumstances, (age range from young to mature), for warm friendships/enjoyments. London/and surrounding areas. Box (51)4276. W51.11

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FEMALE GRADUATE 35, quite attractive, interests: red/green politics, CND, nature — seeks similar humorous, stable, self-confident man. Ageing drug-free hippies welcome! Photo? London. Box (50) 4226. W50.7

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LEEDS, BALD BUT FRIENDLY, 45, 5′ 8″, fit, attractive, good company, own teeth, wide interests, hill-walker, seeks long term relationship with warm, lively and intelligent lady. Box (51)4287. W51.17

MALE, 32, single, graduate, accountant, seeks sincere girl. I am medium build, not unattractive either. Hobbies: travel, music, gardening, Methodist not religious, but caring, loyal. I am also called Indian, but you don't have to be. Croydon/anywhere. Box (50)4225. W50.15

MALE, 45, lonely, frustrated, interested ancient history, archaeology, music desperately wishes to marry broad-minded, liberated lady with similar interests. Lichfield, Staffs. Serious replies only. Box (51)4263. W51.18

MANCHESTER: hairy graduate man (35), medium height, seeks interesting, attractive woman, late 20s to share Indian cookery, landscapes, politics, Cornerhouse evenings, Latin nights. Photo welcomed. Box (50)4251. W50.16

MATURE, GENTLY-FADING, softly-bearded male cyclist, 5′ 5″, slim, seeks compatible female companion for projected trip abroad in search of sun. Box (51)4283. W51.3

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over forties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London N5 2DB. 01-226 5432. N15.31

ORGANICALLY-MINDED graduate male, thirty-seven, planning to move to countryside, would like to meet interested females. Other interests: literature, music, sport, alternative living. Box (51)4264. W51.19

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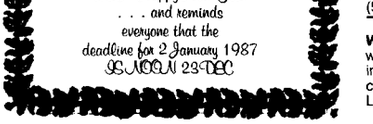
W. MIDLANDS: young, shy housewife, 21, 5′ tall, slight disability in walking, seeks lonely female to be friends with. Interests: watching TV, conversation, country music. Photo, phone number appreciated. Box (51)4261. W51.25

WOMAN, 36, vegetarian, single, enjoys music, pubs, skiing, travel, watching 'Brookside'. Like to meet caring, attractive, unattached man, similar age, for friendship/weekends. Swop photos. Yorks. Box (51)4262. W51.26

WOULD YOUR MID-LIFE crisis like to get together with mine? Woman, 42, attractive, socialist, seeks intelligent, unattached man for non-dependent but caring relationship. Photo appreciated. London/South East. Box (50)4240. W50.24



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BACKCHAT

FOOD

Beans for Boxing Day

Colin Spencer

AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY itself, if you aren't utterly repelled by the thought of food and cooking, perhaps the only dishes that could appeal are those which are made up of ingredients which are too expensive, or require skills which appear too elaborate.

Or, out of bounds food being unobtainable, the temptation might be to give up altogether and to descend to baked beans on toast, but this can be too violent a shock to the palate. Besides, commercial baked beans have too high an amount of sugar and salt — so maybe now is the time to experiment with making your own.

There are also dishes which are light on the digestion, good to look at and which do not require the skills of the Roux Brothers, but appear as if they have had them. The roulade falls into this category; it comes in all sorts of flavours and fillings. Imagine a savoury version of a home-made swiss roll, with the outside sponge made from a flavoured egg mixture and the jam anything you like to conjure up which will spread easily but still keep in place. I made recently a spinach roulade and filled it with taramasalata; when cut into slices, spirals of dark green and pink, it looked as good as it tasted. But you could equally well fill the inside with chopped prawns or smoked salmon and cream cheese, or finely chopped fresh herbs in the egg mixture instead of the purée of spinach, and fill the interior with a leek purée or one made out of crab. The variations are endless; it is just a matter of mastering the technique.

You need a non-stick swiss-roll tin, which is like a baking tray with a lip, to hold the mixture. They come in various sizes: 12″ × 7″ or 12″ × 10″. The bigger size will give a thinner roulade, more easily rolled, but reducing the amounts for the smaller tin will have the same effect. If the egg mixture looks too thick, you can, once it is cool, slice it carefully through the middle and have two roulades for the price of one. You also need plenty of greaseproof paper and the patience not to turn out the roulade until it has completely cooled. These roulades are all eaten cold and can be made the day before. They make an excellent first course or, with salad, a light family supper.

Smoked cod's roe is a good buy over Christmas; it keeps well in the refrigerator for a few days or even a week. The roe will combine not just with the classic ingredients — lemon juice, garlic and olive oil — but with cream cheese, sour cream or smetana. If you don't want to turn it into a purée, I find the roe, thinly sliced with brown toast, makes a perfect first course, or simply used as part of a platter of smoked fish which makes an attractive supper. If you are going to use the roe in the roulade, then it needs to be made with cream cheese and not olive oil to give it enough stiffness not to seep out of the roll.

Jane Hudson

Spinach Roulade with Tarama

½ lb (250 g) spinach leaves
4 eggs, beaten
2 oz (50 g) Gruyere, grated
2 tbsp double cream
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 oz (25 g) Parmesan, grated
(For the tarama)
½ lb (250 g) smoked cods roe
Juice and zest of 1 lemon
2 cloves garlic, crushed
4 oz (125 g) cream or curd cheese
Freshly ground black pepper

Wash and chop the spinach. Drain it well and place in a pan without any added water. Cook over a very low heat for 5 minutes or until the leaves have reduced their bulk by two-thirds. Leave to cool, then drain and place in the blender; reduce to a rough purée. Add the eggs, Gruyere, cream and seasoning. Butter the roulade tin liberally and pour in the mixture. Place in a preheated oven 425F/220C/Gas Mark 7 for 15 minutes, or until the mixture has cooked through. Leave to cool.

Meanwhile, make the tarama by skinning the roe and adding all the remaining ingredients and blending to a thick puree. Have a large piece of greaseproof paper and scatter it with the Parmesan. Turn out the roulade onto the paper. Spread with the tarama and roll up very carefully, using the paper to propel the roll.

There is a story about my distinguished colleague, Jane Grigson, being asked by an interviewer whether she ever gave her child baked beans. Ms Grigson answered, 'Very seldom as they take too long to cook.' Nonplussed, the interviewer retreated. Homemade baked beans can be placed in a low oven, or an Aga or Rayburn, and left overnight. On raising the heat a trifle, you could cook them at Gas Mark 4 for about 3 to 4 hours. They are highly delicious and well worth the effort — which is minimal anyway.

Baked Beans

6 oz (175 g) dried small haricot or navy beans, soaked overnight
1 × 8 oz (250 g) tin chopped tomatoes
2 oz (50 g) butter
2 tbsp dark brown sugar
3 tbsp tomato purée
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine all the ingredients in a marmite or earthenware crock, except for the seasoning which must be added after the beans are cooked. Add enough water to cover the beans by 1½″. Bring to the boil, then place in a preheated oven at 350F/180C/Gas Mark 4 for 3 hours. Take out of the oven and add the seasoning. If it doesn't taste enough of tomato, add another tablespoon of tomato purée and cook for a few minutes more. □

WINE

Burgundy for beginners

Stephen Brook

AS MY LIFE moves peacefully to its close, I shall instruct my grieving grandchildren and retainers to bring up and open for our benefit a specially selected case of superb Burgundy. Deathbeds are not the only places on which to indulge oneself. The Christmas table will do, though these days few people imagine they can afford to lavish good quality Burgundy on family and friends, and inferior Burgundy isn't worth drinking at all. But affordable authentic Burgundies can be found, as I shall show.

Great Burgundy is, in my view, the most satisfying of all red wines, if only because it is the

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most thoroughly sensual. The bouquet of the Pinot Noir grape, the sole variety permitted for Burgundy, is incomparably perfumed, with aromas of raspberries, violets, roses and cherries. It must be the most exquisite of all scents produced by the fermented grape. In the mouth a good Burgundy should be a perfect balance of fruit, silky texture and finesse. It can be a powerful wine, but that power should always be held in check; Burgundy should not be a blockbuster. Unmatched elegance is the source of its distinction.

Well, that's the theory. Unfortunately, few bottles live up to expectations. For some reason, the British palate long associated Burgundy with a heavy, sumptuous wine, reeking of the farmyard and lacking all finesse, and producers confirmed this notion by beefing up their wine with Algerian Château Affreux and any other cheap plonk they could lay their hands on. Many wines served up as Burgundy were, quite simply, disgusting. At a lunch recently a Master of Wine, who should have known better, poured me a glass of what he called 'old-fashioned' Burgundy. Having tasted the soupy stuff, I could only sigh with relief that fashions have changed. Four years ago the wine merchant Anthony Hanson blew the whistle on the appalling things going on in Burgundy, and the situation is definitely improving.

Authentic Burgundy can never be cheap. The zone of production is, compared to Bordeaux or Chianti, small, and the climate is uncertain; hail and frost and rain can play havoc with the vines. Unlike Bordeaux, there are few great estates and many growers still sell their wine to *négociants* (wholesalers) who blend and market it. Some *négociants*, such as Drouhin, Louis Latour and Louis Jadot, make excellent wine, but it is far wiser to find a small grower whose style gives you pleasure. A modest wine from a great winemaker is likely to be superior to the more grandly labelled product of most wholesalers.

In blind-tasting and selecting some Burgundies (all under £10) I have concentrated on such growers' wines. They are not easy to find. Production is too limited for many to be available in high street shops or wine warehouses. A Burgundy estate may be as large as a Bordeaux property but, whereas the Bordeaux will produce a single wine each year, the Burgundian may make up to 15, since his holdings will consist of numerous parcels in different vineyards. In the case of Burgundy, it is definitely worth consulting a specialist wine merchant, such as those listed below.

Whereas anything labelled simply as Claret is likely to be an insipid blend, this is not necessarily so in the case of Burgundy. Often a grower will own some excellent vines just outside his village boundary; the wine cannot be sold as Volnay or Beaune or whatever, and must be labelled plain Bourgogne. There are some excellent growers' wines to be found at between £5 and £6, such as Jean-Claude Bachelet's 1982 (Bibendum), Joseph Roty's 1983 (Corney & Barrow) and the formidable 1984 from Pierre Boillot (Windrush), which will be even better next year. (Beware of shops' own brands: the straight Burgundies sold at under £4 by, say, Victoria or Sainsbury's are not worth the money.)

Among village wines, I particularly relished two 1982s from Morey St Denis, one from the outstanding Domaine Dujac (C&B, £10.12), the other from Georges Lignier (Bibendum, £9.88). A 1982 Savigny from Jean Jacques Girard (Morris & Verdin, £9.80) is in a lighter style but with true Pinot Noir character. Perhaps best of all is the 1982 Volnay from Michel Lafarge (Windrush, £9.39), a full flavoured but vigorous wine that was a joy to drink. All these wines conform to my notion of what Burgundy should taste like, but those who prefer a more vegetal style, which is authentic in its way but not to my personal taste, would enjoy a 1982 Pommard from Guillemard-Dupont (Lay & Wheeler, £9.09).

On the next rung up the ladder are single vineyard (or *cru*) wines. Most are very expensive, but a few affordable examples can be found. There's a lovely 1982 Volnay Santenots from Boillot-Georget (Windrush, £9.45). But most delicious of all are two very different wines: a vigorous, characterful, enchanting 1982 Volnay Premier Cru from Hubert de Montille (Domaine Direct, £9.78) and the more sumptuous velvety 1982 Savigny Aux Guettes from Simon Bize (Windrush, £9.56/Domaine Direct, £8.62). Uncork one of these bottles if you can afford it; if not, the straight Bourgogne Rouge wines mentioned earlier will not disgrace your Christmas table. Indeed, I'm convinced any of these wines will upstage even the most resplendent turkey. □

Bibendum, Corney & Barrow, Domaine Direct, Haynes Hanson & Clark and Morris & Verdin are all London-based Burgundy specialists. Outside London contact Windrush Wines, The Barracks, Cecily Hill, Cirencester; and Lay & Wheeler in Colchester and Southend.

Weekend competition

No 2955 **Set by Russell Lucas**

We have all heard about selling refrigerators to Eskimos. But how is it done? A plausible sales pitch, max. 120 words, to convince the most sceptical igloo-dweller: by 31 December, please.

No 2952 **Set by E. O. Parrott**

TV ads to sell authors of less than obviously popular appeal.

Report **By Babe Bio**

Becos its the seesern of Good Will (St. Nikolas' younger brother? ho-ho) I'll cast a vail over all those entries that couldernt have shifted *The Thorn Birds* and just say well dun to the winners. There's a tenner going to eech of you — plus, for lucky old Peter Norman, a game of Artificial Intelligence, the thinking person's chess. (But dont dispair, the rest of you: theres another to be wun in a fortnite's time.) Happy wotsit. Dont drink too much (youll only embarrass yore children).

(A living-room. A teenage girl is perched demurely on the sofa. A teenage boy offers her coffee with a leer. She sips it, shudders and pulls her skirt down over her knees)
Denis Norden *(on voice-over)*: When the *coffee* you've made gives no *grounds* for optimism . . .
(The boy crosses to the stereo with a desperate smile and puts on a particularly noisy track by Bruce Springsteen. The girl covers her ears and reaches for her coat.)
Denis Norden: When the *food* of *love* only causes *indigestion* . . .
(The girl is at the door. The boy plucks at her sleeve and produces a battered paperback. The girl, despite herself, is intrigued; they return to the sofa)
Denis Norden: Isn't it time to get out the JOHN DONNE?
Boy *(reciting)*: Twice or Thrice had I loved thee/Before I knew thy face or name . . .
(Lute music plays softly. The light dims to a fireside flicker. The girl settles back contendedly, oblivious to her skirt riding up)
Boy: License my roaving hands, and let them go,/before, behind, between, above, below . . .
(The camera pans tactfully to the fireside rug, where a succession of underclothes falls)
Denis Norden: John Donne — for a perfect leg-over every time . . .

PETER NORMAN

(Picture of Philby. Third Man *music)*
Deep voice: Philby. For years he played a double role; hoodwinked a nation's security services. But was he the *first* of the great deceivers? No. A century before him, this man *(picture of Spencer Tracy)* fooled all London, appearing at night not as Dr Jekyll but as Mr Hyde. *(Shot of Hyde doing something awful)* But travel even *further* back in time . . . the Man in the Iron Mask . . . the Prisoner of Zenda . . . Monte Cristo . . . *(the voice begins to echo)* . . . back until . . . *(Chord. Close-up of robe and sandalled feet.)* . . . the greatest deception in history: *THE IMITATION OF CHRIST! (Loud church music — Messiaen?)* Exposed when it happened by the strange monk Thomas à Kempis, now this incredible story shows man's powers of deception are limitless. Read it, and wonder! Is this the double Eco?

JEREMIAH SOWERBY

(A crowded party)
Sue: It's uncanny. Just the things *I* like. Vivaldi, Beaujolais, Bunuel . . .
Keith: I know. It's as though I've known you always. Bet you like wholefoods.
Sue; Oh, I do.
Keith: And George Meredith.
Sue: Er . . .
Keith: You know: *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel.*
Sue: I'm afraid . . .
Keith *(pained expression)*: Sorry, I didn't realise . . . Well, nice meeting you.

(Over coffee at Katie's)
Sue: It's always like that, Katie. What's wrong with me?
Katie: Simple, Sue. What've you been reading?
Sue: Nothing special: Colleen McCullough, Jackie Collins.
Katie: I thought so. Look, Sue, why read modern romantic substitutes when you can get the real thing? *(Shows copy of* Diana of the Crossways *to camera)* Honestly, it really works.
Sue *(doubtfully)*: Well, I could try it.

(A thatched church, wedding bells. Sue and Dave pose for photographer under hood, foreground)
Sue: Looking forward to the next 50 years, darling?
Dave: I'll say. With all our shared pleasures: Spielberg, pizzas, Madonna . . .
Sue: And . . . *(knowing look)* . . . George Meredith.
(Photographer emerges from hood, revealed as Alan Freeman)
Alan F: Sue, I've got the complete Shirley Conran here to swap for you *Evan Harrington*.
Sue: No thanks, Alan. George Meredith will do for me.
Voice over: The one who *knows* about Modern Love. George Meredith. The Real Thing.

NOEL PETTY

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FIRST STATESPERSON

Year one: cocoa, charcoal and cubism

Malcolm Imrie (research)

RICHARD NIXON, Albert Camus and Benjamin Britten were all born in 1913. So was the New Statesman, *offspring of the Fabian Society; its first issue appeared on 12 April, with Clifford Sharp as editor, John Collings Squire as literary editor (later known to his enemies in the Bloomsbury group as leader of the 'Squirearchy') and Beatrice and Sidney Webb as its strongest political voices. In the last year of peace, and almost the last year of premodernism, the burning political topics were the activities of the militant suffragettes of the WPSU and Home Rule for Ireland. But there were others, as you will see: pornography, pheasants, Tango Teas, cocoa and free love. 1913 was the year when D.H. Lawrence's first major novel,* Sons and Lovers, *was published ('a very sincere and a very thorough piece of work': NS). So were Freud's* Totem and Taboo, *Husserl's* Phenomenology, *Mann's* Death in Venice *and Proust's* Swann's Way, *but we missed those.*

Here then are a few of the preoccupations of the New Statesman's *first year, in a time when the century still seemed full of promise and the Fabian middle classes — to judge from the magazine's most frequent advertiser — of effete gases and waste matter.*

Leader, 12 April:
In common with every thinking man and woman of to-day we recognise that vast social changes are imminent, and for our own part we welcome them. That we welcome them is our bias. But it is not in any sense whatever a party bias. The world movement towards collectivism is altogether beyond and above party, and our belief in it rests neither upon dogma nor upon a desire to support any sectional interest, but simply upon a process of reasoning applied to the known facts of modern industrial organisation and political democracy . . . We need not undertake to define the ideal State which we conceive as the goal of our search, for doubtless it is identical with that of all other people who are honestly and whole-heartedly seeking it. It is enough to say that it is a State in which health, comfort, culture and personal freedom are the rules instead of the exceptions . . .

Letter:
Sir:—Forgive me for propounding this small difficulty. How is one to ask for your journal if one wants more than a single copy? It is simple to ask for 'two *Nations*' or 'two *Spectators*' but am I to say to my newsagent, 'I want two *New Statesmen*' or 'I want two *New Statesmans*'? Neither sounds quite right. *H de B Winton, Exeter. Eds reply:* As our correspondent puts it, he has either to fly against sense, or to trample upon euphony . . . We should suggest as a third and more satisfactory form: 'I want eight copies of *The New Statesman*.'

Leader, 8 November:
We all of us know the little pornographic shops which thickly sprinkle certain streets in West London, and are to be found occasionally in all large towns. We have all of us, either directly or blushingly out of the corner of a transitory eye, examined the wares that embellish their windows. They are a strange hotch-potch. Rabelais, vilely printed and bound, is always there, and Zola also; with the Decameron, the Heptameron, 'Aristotle's Works', Moll Flanders, Maria Monk, Les Contes Drolatiques, the novels of the late Paul de Kock, and various modern shockers in gaudy pictorial wrappers. Some of the books thus displayed are ordinary medical books which could not excite the most goatish of youths; some of them are dull; some are mere ordinary sensationalism; some are good literature; some merely pose as such.

But though there are books in the collection that have, to the discerning eye, a moral aim, and others that, sold as pornography, are utter frauds, they all have this in common: that the shopkeepers believe them to be dirty, and that it is purely on the strength of their real or supposed lasciviousness that the customers who frequent these shops purchase them. Is the exegesis of a low commercial mind to be the test of indecency? There are certain books that most men would agree (even those who like reading them) in condemning as indecent . . . But books that are mere incitative filth are nowadays very rarely sold in this country except under the rose; and the novels that *ad hoc* Reformers have in mind fall into the two categories of 'classics' and of modern erotic novels. What sort of censorship can be properly applied to either kind of book?

Leader (on censorship and the 'mystical dogma' of the plain man), 19 April:
Who *is* this plain man after all? We are told the signs by which we shall know him: he loves beer, and tobacco, and monogamy, and robust stories, and certain sorts of religion, and the works of Mr Belloc and Mr Chesterton; he hates Socialists, and Jews, and Puritans, and cocoa, and free-love, and the works of Ibsen and Mr Bernard Shaw. Frankly, we do not believe he exists . . .

Leader, 29 November:
It is not so easy as you might think to decide what is the dullest feature in the Tango Teas upon which Londoners are now wasting their afternoons and their loose silver. The most disconcertingly tedious part of the whole entertainment is, in our opinion, the Tango itself: it is mere virtuoso work in dancing — an eccentric caper, not after beauty, but after variety. But the rest of the programme has no compensating liveliness. The songs are sad affairs, even for a music-hall, and the band, with its continual 'selections' dropped into every available hole in the afternoon's amusement, gets on the nerves like a tune played over and over again. And then, to crown everything, comes the parade of mannequins wearing the latest fashions in women's dress, or what will be the latest fashions in another month or two. On the whole, we think this part of the show must be given the prize for inanity. The Tango is bad, and the tea varies, but this milliner's business — well, it is not so much dull, perhaps, as an insult to what intelligence the human race has left . . . Idleness, as it does not take a Sunday-school teacher to see, is the universal dressmaker, and a woman who is not allowed to work and does not drink and has not even a vote, is driven among the mannequins as surely as if you forced her there by law . . .

Leader, 3 May:
It is incontestable that the more recent activities of the militant suffragists have substantially diminished the chances favouring the passage of any Woman Suffrage measure during the present Parliament. They have done this in two ways: first by giving the declared opponents of the suffrage the moral advantage of being possessed of a species of righteous indignation; and second, by providing those who are half in favour and half afraid of the change — and their name is legion — with a plausible excuse for postponing it indefinitely. The militants, of course, care very little about these trifles. They are far more concerned with the success of the method to which they have committed themselves than even with the gaining of the vote itself . . .

Let us admit that in the situation which the

Radio Times Hulton Picture Library

Piccadilly Circus, 1913, when wheel clamps were what they used to stop the trams running backwards down hills

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militants have created there is every excuse for coercion. It *is* improper — wicked, if you like — to burn down houses, blow up railway stations, and destroy people's private correspondence . . . those who are opponents of the agitation are fully justified in demanding measures of coercion of the sternest possible kind.

But there are two fatal objections to the use of coercion in the present case. The first is that it is impossible to carry the coercion to effective lengths owing to the existence of a great and influential body of public opinion, which, while it condemns the violence of the militants, would condemn still more any real and wholesale violence on the part of the Government. The second objection to coercion is that even if it could be employed, it would not succeed. When coercion is employed against people who are supported by the inner light of their consciences, it never succeeds . . .

When any considerable body in a State seriously demands the rights of citizenship, two things can be tried: Liberalism, which means enfranchisement, or coercion. It is a stark impossibility for a Government seeking to represent the Liberal elements in the community to adopt the latter alternative and come though unscathed . . .

Shorter Notices

A Box of Chocolates By Annie Cecilia Oldmeadow. *Grant Richards* 1s. net.

A short story, the moral of which is that militant suffragettes should never throw bombs at Cabinet Ministers, because, if they do, they may not throw straight enough for practical purposes. *21 June*

JUST OUT.

THE TRUTH ABOUT WOMAN

BY

C. GASQUOINE HARTLEY

(Mrs. Walter Gallichan)

408 pp. 7/6 net.

FIRST REVIEW.

"As a stimulus to fundamental and fruitful thought concerning the Woman problem, we very heartily commend this remarkable book. . . . It is refreshing to turn from the trivialities one too often hears in discussions about 'the Vote' to such trenchant but broad-minded pleading for the emancipation of women. . . . Every chapter abounds in challenges to thought, and we must thank a woman who has dared and cared to think and dared to say."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

NOW READY AT ALL BOOKSHOPS AND LIBRARIES.

EVELEIGH NASH,
36 King Street, Covent Garden, London.

My Motor Milestones: How to Tour in a Car By the Baroness Campbell von Laurentz. *Herbert Jenkins* 5s. net.

There is no purpose apparent in this medley of recollections of motor tours, which falls into the same category as the published diaries of uninteresting persons. The author has much to say about hotels, food, and roads; but, though she twice stopped at Chartres, she does not mention the Cathedral, or anything else. *5 July*

Cubism By Albert Leizes and Jean Metzinger. *Fisher Unwin* 5s. net.

As the authors assure us that only four or five painters understand the fundamental law of Cubism, we need make no excuses for our being amongst the laity. When we are told that Cézanne suggests Rembrandt and that 'an attentive study of Michelangelo authorises us to say that the Cubists have won their patent of nobility,' we can but tremble in silence. With the incomprehensible theory of Cubist painting (one canon of which is that position on the canvas does not matter) there is little point in dealing, as we have in the appendix twenty-five examples of its practice. These vary immensely. There is, for example, nothing obviously wrong with Cézanne's 'Woman in Red', except that she is insane. But Picasso's 'Guitar Player' is merely a blob . . . Compared with these, the Futurists have almost as much to recommend them as they themselves claimed in their 'Manifesto'. *20 September*

Leader (on the Negro Problem in America), 13 December:

Lynchings are decreasing in number; but the statistics are sufficiently terrible. On an average, for the last thirty years, 93 negroes and 41 whites have been lynched every year. From 80 to 90 per cent of the lynchings are in the south. The facts refute once and for all the contention that it is the protection of white women which requires the murdering of black men. A far smaller proportion of blacks commit rape than of Italian or Mexican immigrants. 'Less than one-fourth of the lynchings of negroes is due to assaults upon women; in 1912 only one-fifth was for this cause. The largest per cent of lynchings is for murder or attempted murder. Over 10 per cent is for minor offences.'

B.R. Carter, On The Psychology of an 'Unemployed', 9 August:

. . . The first emotion of an 'unemployed' is very often one of intense relief at being absolved from the anxiety of keeping his job. The hateful music of the machine has ceased for him. He has leisure now to listen to the music of the spheres and, if the weather be summer and the fields not too far away, commune with nature — to 'loaf and invite' his 'soul' . . . There are several aspects of nature, however, and before long the advertisement sheet and the daily tramp have come to take a hand in the scheme of things. Then he strikes a new world, over which the Spirit of Irony seems to brood with a massive malignity surely accorded to no other — the world of the unemployed. First there is the acrid joke of the 'trade returns'. Never, it appears, has his country been so prosperous as during his months of vainly looking for work. The exports of iron, ships, cotton, coal, capital, emigrants, have beaten all records . . . Meanwhile, the notice of 'No hands wanted' is posted up outside the factory gates, and 'not over 25' becomes the monotonous cry of the 'situation vacant' . . .

'Beta', On The Hour of the Pheasant, 13 December:

The educated countryman knows that pheasant-preserving has been overdone, that it leads annually to the ruthless destruction of other birds, vermin-eating and weed-eating birds, that it is not worth its outlay, and that, while existing conditions obtain, it can offer little more than dull, purposeless killing. The time is ripe for the abandonment of what is no more than a rather stupid and a very vulgar habit; and it will pass, not at the bidding of politicians, but at the instigation of commonsense.

I advise you

to give up tampering with your delicate digestive organs by seeking to relieve that indigestion with drugs and palliatives. I know the action of drugs—know it from years of experience—and I say emphatically that you must remove the cause of indigestion before you can expect permanent relief. That cause is readily removed by

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BISCUITS & CAPSULES

Bragg's Charcoal absorbs the impurities set up in the process of digestion—effete gases and waste matter—and passes them out of the system. It has no direct effect on any organ of the body. Unlike drugs, it is never assimilated and so cannot harm you, and you will not find it necessary to increase the dose.

Bragg's Charcoal Capsules are a handy form for the pocket.

Sold by all Chemists and Stores. Biscuits 1/-, 2/- and 4/- per tin; Capsules 2/- per box.

Samples of 5 different forms in which Bragg's Charcoal may be pleasantly administered sent free on receipt of 3d. postage. Mention this paper.

J. L. BRAGG, LTD.
14 Wigmore Street, W.

Leader, On Black Cats, 13 December:

It is the distinction of the black cat that he is one of the few cheerful superstitions left to us . . . It is easy to imagine the enthusiasm of the audience at Manchester the other evening when a black cat walked on to the platform at a meeting of Sir Edward Carson's. Lord Derby, who presided, hailed it as an omen of the success of the Ulster cause. He went on to tell the audience that the last Unionist victory in Manchester had been presaged by the appearance of a black cat in some polling booth or other. That, you may be sure, was the most convincing argument in the night's speech-making. People who will stumble over the logic of politics for a lifetime can appreciate the logic of the black cat in a fraction of a second.

Leader, 20 December:

There is a cant of Christmas, and there is a cant of anti-Christmas. There are some people who want to throw their arms round you simply because it is Christmas; there are other people who want to strangle you simple because it is Christmas . . . As we grow older, we confess, we accept Christmas more philosophically than we used to . . . We can now pull a cracker with any man; we can accept gifts without actual discourtesy; and if the flame goes out before our helping of plum-pudding reaches us we are as mortified as can be . . . we can even forgive our neighbour who plays 'While shepherds watched' all day long on the gramophone. The Salvation Army, which plays the same tune and one or two others all through the small hours on the trombone and the cornet-à-piston, is a severer test of endurance. But even that we can grin and bear when we remember that the Salvationist bandsmen are but a sort of melancholy herald angels. The solitary figure in the Christmas procession, indeed, whom we hate with a boiling and bubbling hatred, is the postman who does not call. In Utopia the postman does not miss a single letter-box on Christmas Day. Or any other day. □

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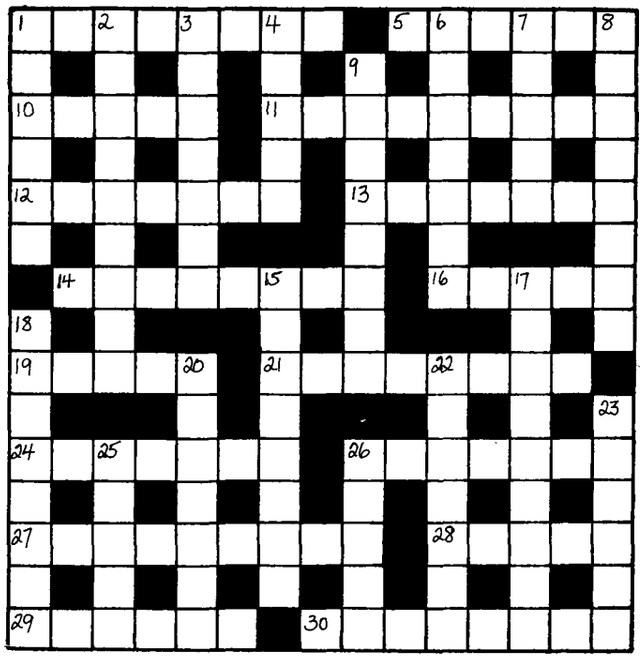
Weekend Crossword 1542

PRIZE: £10 Book Token for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1542, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 6 January.



ACROSS

1. Use Latin translation for 'to cut off' (8)
5. I stay with a male in the same place (6)
10. Applause for villain (5)
11. The same but without the child's head it would be different in detail (9)
12. On fire although born idle (7)
13. Sailor beheaded on a ship for being a pirate (7)
14. In general it may make the BA longer (8)
16. Bird used in making Rebecca's dress (5)
19. Apply in writing for inspiring women (5)
21. Bend over in a river to get a flower (8)
24. Animal found in a stream in part of India (7)
26. Made out of this rib so not foreign (7)
27. One country holds an unusual trial for another (9)
28. The artist takes one to heart and makes one welcome (5)
29. Catch a parent going astray (6)
30. Not remnants, but without strong suits (2, 6)

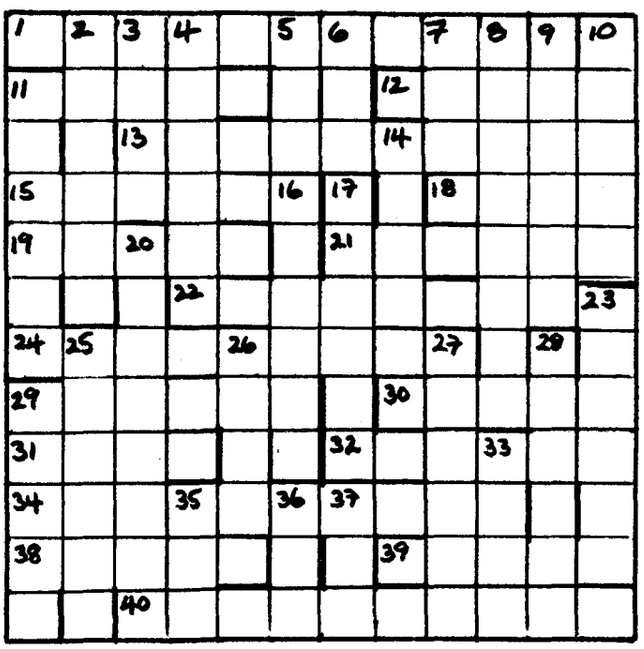
DOWN

1. A feeder comes in most of the time to drink (6)
2. Travellers would be a long way off if there were no wise men (9)
3. Searching for one of the pictures in a card game? (7)
4. A graduate needs this object for immersion (5)
6. The creature is out of the race, but money is still being put on it (7)
7. Where a first-class rotter turns up (5)
8. It gives one airs to meet one's end in an island (8)
9. College port (8)
15. A friend holds a game to be outside the domain of ethics (8)
17. Turned miser when about to let out from solitary state (9)
18. Leave country and start going into foreign territory (8)
20. Sunny places which are so liberal with song (7)
22. Wrongly hire ten, not one (7)
23. Hunts would be hot if there were no legal statements (6)
25. Establish anew among Devonshire settlers (5)
26. There's a party so give the old chap a ring (5)

SETSQUARE

Salamanca 115: 'Christmas Fare'

PRIZE: £35 cheque for first correct solution opened. Entries to Salamanca 115, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 20 January 1987.*



Clues consist of five types: FD — Food and Drink; edible items alternate with drinkables, either beginning first, neither defined, the entered form only being clued: MP — Mince pies; a word is clued by part or all of the line, a hidden jumble of it also being contained, but the entered form is a further jumble, another real word: SB — Stuffed birds; answers consist of birds undefined but partly clued which require a little or a lot of stuffing: CC — Christmas crackers; the typical contents have been removed from two loosely related words defined by the link and run together, the remainder of the clue leading to the residue which is entered: AG — Absent guests; the guest missing from the defined answer as many times as necessary in eight cases provides the make-up of the guest whose presence is anyway inferred. Merry Christmas.

ACROSS

1(CC) Some fellow among minstrels carried these instruments
11(MP) You'll need Chambers for some words
12(MP) Song you can't hum easily
13(SB) One swallowed by fabulous beast
15(FD) Decorated, say, without gold round
18(AG) Coins, round, member of flying service keeps back
19(AG) Possesses surprised expression, being somewhat void
21(MP) This heralds the advent of cable
22(CC) Beasts in a stormier display
24(CC) Long destroyer carrying monster vessels
29(FD) One among small things returned for example
30(AG) For making holes this is turned as a rule
31(MP) Discount for sea-going traders
32(SB) Piano requiring pedal power
34(FD) Officer always taking a pure blend
38(AG) Conductress, see, records the second trip back
39(SB) This clue's not hard?
40(CC) These birds have late start in moult, I see? Possibly

DOWN

2(FD) See cases are following one round
3(AG) Rumour was you got up drunk at first
4(FD) What's most attractive tastewise about the Sun?
5(AG) Mac's local women with skirts
6(MP) This guess is Shakespearian mainly
7(MP) Had good reason to straggle
8(SB) Sailor in southern latitude
9(FD) Purgative drug restraining cold
10(MP) Smoky smell coming from the crematorium
11(CC) Measures cloud on mountain-top that's exchanged halves
14(MP) One's entertaining great numbers
16(MP) Taught in some places to scribble and recite
17(MP) Chap rudely peeks round this curtain?
20(SB) Work in 'oily' plants?
23(MP) Sail the sea-green Atlantic
25(MP) Girl with a clear complexion
26(MP) He may be studied in criminology, getting safes open
27(MP) Where warrior rested spear during free tussle
28(FD) Jock's worthy number
29(SB) Two taps in alphabetical order?
33(AG) In Aberdeen foreign business having internal trouble?
35(MP) What's green and round in the vegetable patch?
36(AG) Victim of paralysis needing some splints
37(MP) This is always what judges represent

*The solution to Salamanca 115 will be published in our 23 January 1987 issue.

The solution to Crossword 1540 has been held over and will now be published on 2 January 1987.

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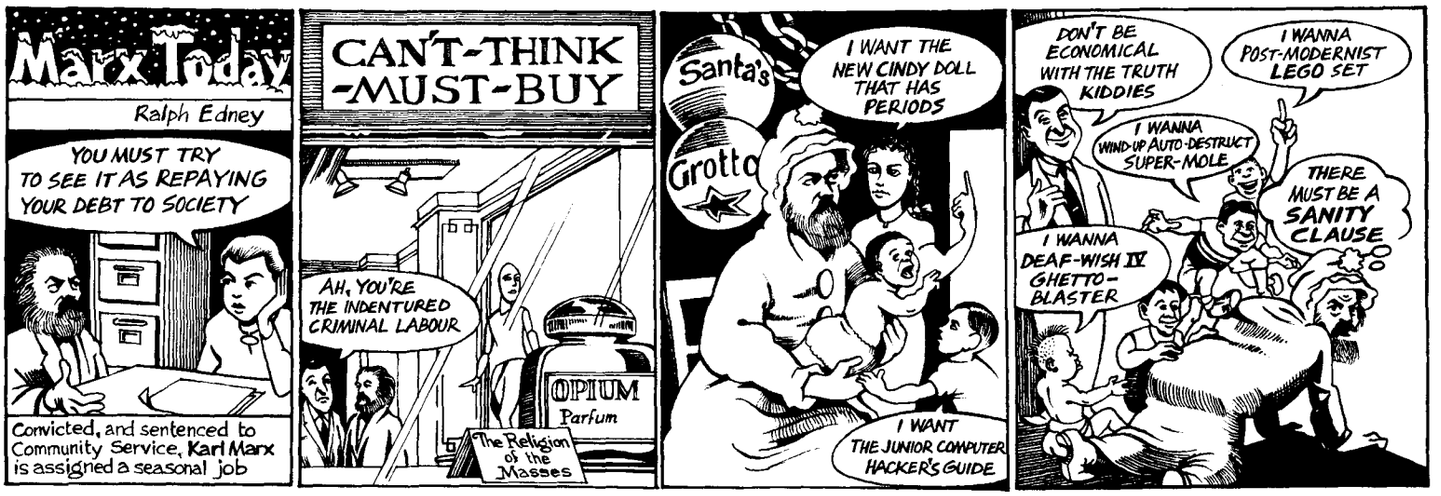

Marx Today
Ralph Edney
YOU MUST TRY TO SEE IT AS REPAYING YOUR DEBT TO SOCIETY
Convicted, and sentenced to Community Service, Karl Marx is assigned a seasonal job
CAN'T-THINK -MUST-BUY
AH, YOU'RE THE INDENTURED CRIMINAL LABOUR
OPIUM Parfum
The Religion of the Masses
Santa's Grotto
I WANT THE NEW CINDY DOLL THAT HAS PERIODS
I WANT THE JUNIOR COMPUTER HACKER'S GUIDE
DON'T BE ECONOMICAL WITH THE TRUTH KIDDIES
I WANNA POST-MODERNIST LEGO SET
I WANNA WIND-UP AUTO-DESTRUCT SUPER-MOLE
THERE MUST BE A SANITY CLAUSE
I WANNA DEAF-WISH IV GHETTO-BLASTER

Chess

BRACE YOURSELVES, we're going to begin with an act from The Spanish Tragedy — I mean one of the games from the match that cost England the Olympiad gold medals:

Miles (England)—Fernandez (Spain), Dubai 1986, Rd 10. Grünfeld Defence. 1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4. Nf3 Bg7 5. Qb3 dxc4 6. Qxc4 0-0 7. e4 a6 7 . . . Na6 and 7 . . . Bg4 are still in need of repair after the knocking they took in Karpov v Kasparov. **8. Qb3** 8. Be2 is probably the best move. **c5 9. dxc5 Nbd7 10. Qb4?!** Suspiciously artificial — though as Portisch-Fernandez from Rd 2 had gone 10. c6 bxc6 11. Be2 Qc7 12. 0-0 Rb8 13. Qc2 c5, this must have been intended as an improvement. **Qc7 11. Be3 Ng4 12. Bg5 a5 13. Qc4 Bxc3+!?** Normally one would not volunteer to part with such a Bishop and Black is indeed under a sort of compulsion: he needs to prevent 14. Nd5. **14. Qxc3 Nxc5 15. Bc4?** No doubt about it, this is the move that loses the game. After 15. Be2! the combinative 15 . . . Nxf2 is not quite on because of 16. Bh6 Ncd3+ 17. Bxd3 Qxc3+ 18. bxc3 Nxd3+ 19. Ke2 Rd8 20. Rhd1. **b5! 16. Bd5** White is likely to lose even more quickly after 16. Bxb5 Qb6. **b4 17. Qc2 Ba6!** A new variation on the old theme King-in-the-centre. **18. Bc4 Ne6. 19. Bd3 Qxc2 20. Bxc2 Nxg5 21. Nxg5 Rac8 22. Bd3 Ne5 23. Kd2** In desperation Miles sends his King out in search of a hiding place that isn't there. **h6 24. Nh3 Rfd8+ 25. Ke3 Rd3+ 26. Kf4 g5+ 27. Kxe5 Rc5+ 28. Bd5 Kg7 29. Rhd1 f6+ 30. Ke6 Rc7 31. Bd7 Rxd1 32. Rxd1 Bxb7 33. Rd4 Bc8+ 34. Kd5 e5 0-1.**

Perhaps 15. Be2 would have given England the extra ½ point needed to topple the USSR. Well, tournaments are always full of might-have-beens and moves you replay a hundred times when you would rather be sleeping. If England had not beaten the USA they might have been relegated from silver to bronze. In fact the decisive game of that match owed little to chance. Short applied a stranglehold as relentless as the great Petrosian's iron grip:

Short (England) — Kavalek (USA), Rd4. Pirc Defence. 1. e4 g6 2. d4 Bg7 3. Nc3 d6 4. Be3 Nf6 5. Qd2 Nc6 In this variation Black usually goes for counterplay on the Q-side with . . . c7-c6 and . . . b7-b5. **6. f3 a6 7. 0-0-0 e6 8. g4 b5 9. h4 h5 10. gxh5!** A difficult decision. **Nxh5 11. Nge2 Bd7 12. Bh3 b4 13. Nb1 a5 14. Bg5 Qc8 15. c4!** Nigel is playing it like a Sämisch King's Indian. Black's advanced Q-side pawns only look threatening. Kavalek has no file to work in and White controls most of the centre. **Qa6 16. Qd3 a4 17. Nd2 Na5 18. Kb1 c6 19. Bg4** After calm preparation White starts to use force. The threat is 20. Bxh5 Rxh5 21. Ng3 followed by h4-h5. **Nf6 20. e5! Nxg4 21. fxg4 d5** Black dare not open the d-file, e.g. 21 . . . dxe5 22. dxe5 Bxe5 23. Nf3. **22. Qf3 Nxc4 23. Nxc4 Qxc4** Black might as well have tried 23 . . . dxc4!? 24. Ng3 a3 25. Ne4 0-0. White's attack will come first, but at least he would go down fighting. **24. Rc1 Qa6 25. h5 Rf8 26. Nf4** Although Black has a pawn more his position is resignable. **c5 27. Rxc5 Rc8 28. Rxc8+ Bxc8 29. h6 Bh8 30. Rc1 Bd7 31. Nd3 b3 32. Nc5 bxa2+ 33. Kxa2 Qa7 34. Bf6 g5 35. Bxh8 Rxh8 36. Qf6 Rh7** Short finishes neatly, but in such a position there are many ways — e.g. 37. Qg7. **37. Qxg5 Kf8 38. Nxe6+! 1-0.**

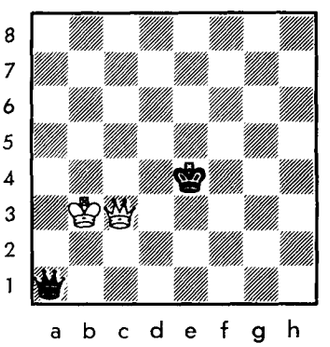
The two players who contributed most to keeping England at bay were Kasparov and Yusupov. The world champion won the individual gold medal for first board by scoring 8½/11 (an Elo performance of 2753). The one blemish on his record was a loss to Yasser Seirawan, and it should be acknowledged that even that came through straining too hard for a win in an endgame that he could have drawn at will.

Above all, however, it was Artur Yusupov who was the anchor-man of the Soviet effort. The 26-year-old from Moscow is (if Jon Speelman will pardon me for saying so) the leading member of the bearded giant brigade, and in Dubai he was massively dependable, the only unbeaten Soviet player, playing in 12 of the 14 matches, and scoring 10 points. Since Short functioned in a similar role for the English team (10 points from 13 games), it seems appropriate to conclude our selection from the multitude of interesting games played at the 27th Olympiad with the encounter between these two.

Yusupov (USSR) — Short (England), Rd6. Queen's Indian. 1. d4 e6 2. c4 Nf6 3. Nf3 b6 4. Nc3 Bb7 5. a3 d5 6. cxd5 exd5 7. g3 Be7 8. Qa4+ c6 9. Bg2 0-0 10. 0-0 Nbd7. A popular variation, yet it puzzles me why Blacks should persist in going in for a structure with such fundamentally unpleasant features. The Bishop is a sorry piece on b7 and Black's only active pawn-push, . . . c6-c5, always weakens d5. **11. Bf4 Nh5 12. Rad1 Nxf4** Hard to say who benefits from this exchange. Black gets the Bishop-pair and doubles White's pawns — yet the pawn on f4 is strong because it supports an outpost at e5. 13. gxf4 Nf6 14. Ne5 Qd6 15. Kh1 Nh5 16. e3 f6 17. Nd3 g5 A critical moment in the game. In striving for counterplay Short lets the White Knight back into e5. **18. Ne2 Kh8 19. Ng3 Ng7** I like this game. It poses so many strategic questions which probably nobody really knows how to answer. Here, for example, would it be a good idea to play 19 . . . Nxg3+ 20. hxg3 g4? That way Black can still keep guard on e5 and might even hope for . . . Bc8-f5 or an attack down the h-file. Or would that, by sealing up so much of the K-side, leave White with both hands free to work on the other wing? **20. fxg5 fxg5 21. Ne5 a5 22. f4 gxf4 23. exf4 Rad8** Perhaps 23 . . . Bh4!?, in order to establish his Knight on f5. **24. Qb3 c5 25. dxc5 Qxc5 26. f5 Ba6 27. Rfe1 Nxf5 28. Nxf5 Rxf5 29. Qh3! Rf6 30. Rc1** 30. Nd7 can be met by 30 . . . Bc8. **Qd6 31. Rc6 Qxc6 32. Nxc6 Rxc6** Since 33. Rxe7? would allow 33 . . . Rc1+ black has an approximate material equivalent for his Queen. **33. Bf1! Bxf1 34. Rxf1 Bf6?** A blunder under pressure. White's advantage is indisputable, but 34 . . . Bf8 or 34 . . . Rg8 would have been more resilient. **35. Qh6 1-0.**

Now for something slightly different . . . One of the daily bulletins (minor miracles of efficiency!) issued in Dubai contained an intriguing article by Yuri Averbakh. Grandmaster Averbakh is the world's leading authority on endgames and also a historian of chess and its ancestral forms. From a manuscript in Istanbul written in 1140 he had unearthed the position given in the diagram.

Actually, he had had to reconstruct the position since the Black Firzan on a1 had been omitted in the original. Yes, a *Firzan*. The Queen, that Amazon of the



chessboard, is a European invention. Her ancestor in the old Arabic game of *shatranj* was a much weaker piece, for the Firzan was restricted to a move of just one square in a diagonal direction — e.g., in this position the White Firzan could move to b2, b4, d2 or d4, while the Black Firzan can only go to b2. The problem is: White to win. Of course, it is impossible to force checkmate with King and Firzan against King. But in *shatranj* there was another way of winning, by baring the enemy King — i.e., by capturing all the other pieces. So the task for White is to capture the Black Firzan without losing his own. If it were White's turn to move the solution would be trivial: **1. Ka2 Kd3 2. Fb4 Kc4** 3. **Fa3** and Black can no longer attack the White Firzan. However, we know that the solution to this position cannot be so easy. In fact, if we are to believe Abu-Bakr-Mohammad Bin Jahia As-Souli (died 946 in Basra) it must be very difficult. For As-Souli claimed: 'Nobody, not even Al-Adli, could solve it, or say it is a draw or that White wins. *There is no man on earth who can solve it if I have not shown him the solution.*' Can you meet As-Souli's challenge and prove *a win for White with Black to move*? The MS does not reveal the solution of which As-Souli was so proud, but it does tell the reader this: 'Black's only move is to play his Shah to a square of his Firzan which is a Knight's move distant from the Red Firzan. Any other move loses at once. Then Red Shah goes on four square of his Firzan.' And it adds that the full solution is 'very long'. (In *shatranj* Black's adversary was Red rather than White.)

George Botterill

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Typesetting by Tocatta Graphics, Tabard House, 116 Southwark Street, London SE1
Printed by QB Ltd, Sheepen Place, Colchester CO3 3LJ. Published by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Co. Ltd at 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

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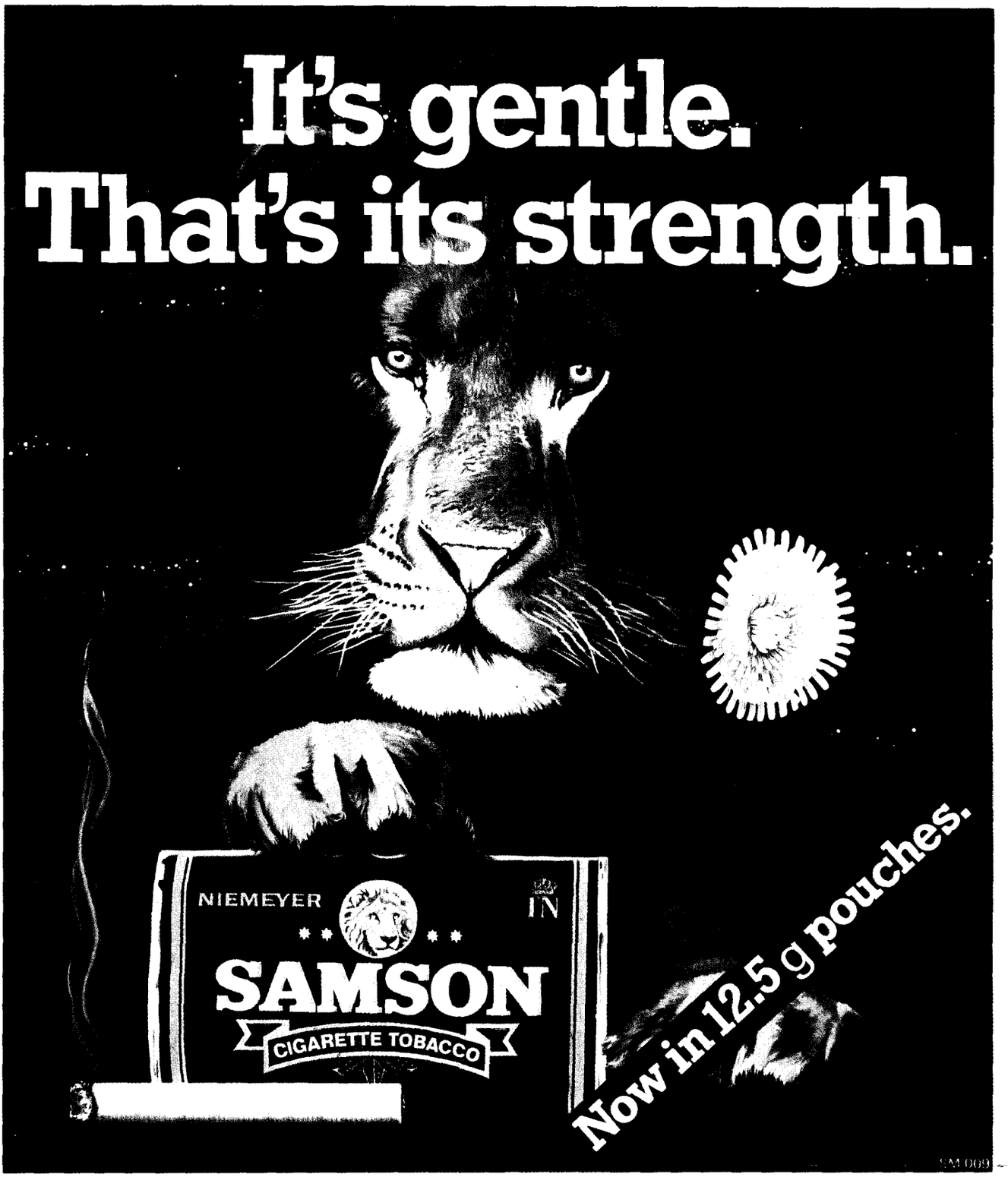

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